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## THE NATIVE IN SOUTH AFRICA



# THE NATIVE IN SOUTH AFRICA

BY

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SECOND EDITION REVISED BY

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## PREFACE

THE second edition of this book requires a few words of explanation.

The book was first published early in 1939 by the Oxford University Press under the title of *The Southern Bantu*. Its object was to provide an elementary account of the position of the Bantu people in South Africa, and it was written with an eye on the need for a suitable book for use in secondary schools and indeed by anyone just beginning the study of "Native affairs."

Owing to enemy action the book went out of print at a time when the demand for it was larger than ever. The Oxford University Press could not undertake a new edition, but they very kindly and promptly granted Mr. Marquard permission to arrange it by other means. His duties on active service, however, prevented Mr. Marquard from himself revising the book and he asked me to do so.

I have altered his text as little as possible, simply deleting or amending those facts and figures that were out of date and adding some others to indicate changes that have taken place in the last five or six years. I have also re-cast the original Chapter X on legislation, adding a short statement about the recognition of Native law.

The revision was completed at the end of 1943 but the publication of the book has been delayed by prevailing war-time conditions. It has not been possible to take account of some recent changes, such as the introduction of old-age pensions for Natives, or of new material published in 1944, such as the Report of the Witwatersrand Mine Native Wages Commission. Moreover, the ordinary reader should remember that the details of Native administration, as distinct from the general tendencies of Native policy, are continually changing, and changing rapidly in these days, so that any account of

them runs some risk of being slightly out of date before it appears in book form

Mr. T. G. Standing, who died on active service, contributed to the first edition an introductory section on the tribal background of the Bantu and also a chapter on Southern Rhodesia. These have been omitted from the present edition.

I am grateful to the Oxford University Press and to Mr Marquard for the ready co-operation that has enabled me to bring out this new edition ; and also to Mr. P. Freer and the Witwatersrand University Press for their practical assistance

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August 1944

## CHAPTER I

### IN THE RESERVES

UNTIL about the middle of the nineteenth century, European control of southern Africa was confined to a portion of the present Cape Province. From about 1830, however, when the Voortrekkers began to move northwards, European control of the land extended rapidly, with this land control there inevitably went political control. Sometimes by war and conquest and sometimes by occupation without actual war, the European had, by 1854, gained control of the present Natal, Orange Free State, and Transvaal. This still left the territory between the Cape border and Natal, Basutoland, Swaziland, Zululand, Bechuanaland, and the two Rhodesias occupied and ruled by Bantu tribes. But during the course of the next fifty years all these areas passed under European government.

While this process was going on, Europeans and Bantu came into contact with each other as foreigners and fought each other at various times over the question of land. Both Europeans and Bantu were farmers, and largely stock-farmers at that, and both sides were continually seeking fresh grazing lands for their large herds of cattle. Whatever minor causes there may have been for the many Bantu-European wars the desire for land was the fundamental cause. Sometimes it was land for pasture and cultivation; sometimes it was land for minerals, but always it was land. In these wars the Europeans sometimes suffered temporary defeat, but in the end their superior weapons and organization always gave them the victory. After victory came annexation and this was followed by one of two things. In a few cases, as in Basutoland and in the present-day Native Reserves, the conquered Bantu were left in possession of a part of the conquered territory. In most cases, however, something like the enclosure movement in England took place and the land was occupied and, later,

enclosed by Europeans, while the Bantu lost their ancient rights of occupation. In the same way that the change from the domestic system to the factory system in England deprived the hand-worker of direct access to his tools, so the conquest of the Bantu deprived large numbers of them of direct access to the land on which, in the past, they had been accustomed to make a living.

As long as the Bantu were independent of European control and had sufficient land for their wants, they did not, as a rule, work for the Europeans. But as soon as the tribes came under European rule and as soon as the Europeans settled down to regular agriculture the process began by which the Bantu have become the main labour force of the country. With European settlement came the establishment of villages and market towns and, after the discovery of diamonds in 1868 and gold in 1886, of large mining centres. With the economic expansion that followed the discovery of diamonds and gold the Bantu became more and more important in the economic life of the country. At first they were not anxious to leave their own agricultural pursuits to work for cash wages; but various factors combined to draw them from their own areas to European centres of life. In the first place, European occupation had left them insufficient land for their primitive and wasteful methods of farming and the law now prevented them from doing what they had been accustomed to do when they found their land insufficient—trekking to new land. As their population increased, therefore, many of them were forced to seek a livelihood as labourers for the Europeans. Also, as the demand for Bantu labour for the farms and the mines increased the Government introduced money taxes for the Bantu in order to compel them to look for cash wages among the Europeans. Recruiting corporations sent agents among the Bantu tribes who offered wages on the mines that were sufficiently attractive to the young men of over-populated areas. Finally, European civilization brought manufactured goods that could be bought for money and the desire for these goods

spurred the Bantu to earn the money by working for the Europeans.

For many years the Bantu men and women who went to earn money working in the towns, on the farms, and on the mines looked on this as a purely temporary occupation. Their real roots were in their own country and, when they had earned enough cash to pay their taxes, to buy some of the European goods that attracted them, or to buy cattle for *lobolo*, they would return to their ancestral homes. This helps to explain why the Bantu have always been prepared to work for such low wages. The cash wages were just an extra and not the real means of subsistence. For the last thirty or forty years, however, the tendency has been for more and more Bantu to settle permanently in the European towns. The old reasons, mentioned above, are still at work drawing the Bantu into European economic life; but there are new forces that attract them to the towns. Now they want education for their children and find it better provided for in the towns than in their own areas or on the European farms; the younger people especially like the life in the towns, where they find social amenities; finally they get much better wages in towns.

We must realize, then, that it is only in the last fifty or sixty years, since about 1880, that the Bantu have come in large numbers to live among the Europeans.<sup>1</sup> During these years they have contributed very largely to the economic growth of the country. It was their labour, combined with the engineering skill of the Europeans, that built the railways, made the roads, worked the mines, and established the industries; it is their labour, under the direction of the European farmer, that has established the agricultural industry of South Africa. To-day the Bantu workman is a permanent feature of mining, farming, transport, and other industries. In the towns Bantu men and women perform most of the unskilled and domestic labour of the country and it is difficult to imagine what South Africa would be like without them.

<sup>1</sup> Bantu were employed before this, in large numbers, in the harbours.

From the time when the Europeans first began to annex Bantu land and thus to gain political control over the Bantu it has always been their aim to separate the two races as far as possible. In the towns we find separate European and Bantu townships ; on the farms the Bantu 'huts' are usually a good distance away from the European dwelling. On a national scale, this separation takes the form of Reserves, where the Bantu alone may own land, and European areas, where they may work but may not own land. Economic forces have been too strong for a policy of complete separation. The Europeans continue to need the labour of the Bantu on the farms and on the mines, and as long as this is so complete separation is obviously impossible. In 1913 the Union Government tried to fix by law the areas where only Bantu and those where Europeans might own land. By this time a very large proportion of the area of the Union was occupied and owned by Europeans and the Government realized that it would have to buy back land in order to give the Bantu who were not working in European areas enough land to live on. Various Government commissions tried to demarcate more land for Bantu occupation, but they met with so much opposition from the Europeans that they failed. In 1936 Parliament passed a new Act dealing with the allocation of land. This Act is very important and will be described in detail later. At this stage it is not necessary to know the details of the Act to understand that, in general terms, European policy is to allow as many Bantu as are necessary for the labour requirements of the Europeans to live in European areas, but not to have ownership rights there ; the rest of the Bantu must live in the Reserves.

The following figures, taken from the census of 1936, will give us a mental picture of the distribution of population in the Union.

Bantu in Native Reserves	.. .. .	3,226,033
Bantu in European towns	.. .. .	1,149,228
Bantu on European farms	.. .. .	2,221,980

For the Europeans the figures are as follows .

Europeans in towns . . . . .	1,307,285
Europeans on farms . . . . .	696,227

Finally, the amounts of land available for Europeans and for Bantu occupation are .

*European* 415,000 square miles (approx.), or about 87 per cent of the total

*Bantu* 58,000 square miles (approx ), or about 13 per cent of the total

N.B.—This figure includes the land made available for Bantu occupation by the Native Land Act of 1936

For convenience sake, the description that follows will deal with each group—Reserves, rural areas, towns—separately , and, in the case of the towns, a distinction will be made between the Bantu in towns and the Bantu on the mines. While it is convenient to divide the subject up in this way it must never be forgotten that there is a constant coming and going between the Native Reserves, the towns, the farms, and the mines, and that the conditions in each are constantly influencing and modifying the conditions in the others. It must not be thought that the population in these different areas is static either in number or in culture or in personnel. The picture at the next census will be different from the one given above.

So far we have spoken about the Bantu as if we referred to one single nation. As soon as we begin to analyse the situation, we find that there are many different Bantu tribes speaking different languages and with different customs. There are, in fact, hundreds of different tribes in the Union and, from the point of view of similarity of language and customs and history, these are usually divided into certain major groups. There is, first, the Nguni group, which comprises hundreds of tribes living in the Reserves between the Drakensberg escarpment and the sea, in the Cape Province, Natal, and the Transvaal. Then there is the Sotho group, which includes the Bantu in Basutoland and those living in Reserves in the Western and part of the Northern Transvaal. Then there are the tribes belonging



to the Shangana-Tonga group, which are found mostly in the north-eastern Transvaal. A less numerous group is the Venda, who live mostly in the Zoutpansberg ; and a still smaller group is the Lemba, but this is numerically unimportant.

The great mass of the Native Reserves of the Union lie in a broad strip between East London and Durban, north of that strip lie the substantial Reserves of Natal and Zululand ; in the Transvaal there are scattered Reserves north of Johannesburg ; in the Orange Free State there are three small Reserves ; and, finally, in British Bechuanaland there are scattered Reserves.<sup>1</sup> Practically all the additional land which the Government is now making available for Bantu occupation is adjacent to the existing Reserves.

The vast majority of the Bantu living in the Reserves are farmers. When the Europeans first came into contact with them the Bantu practised a primitive subsistence economy ; that means that they produced enough to supply their own very elementary wants and had no surplus for exchange. Money did not enter into their lives. Although the first Europeans with whom the Bantu had dealings did not use money very much themselves, they represented a civilization that had long since reached the stage of a money economy and, especially after the discovery of minerals, the Bantu began to come under the influence of this money economy. Contact with European civilization and administration created wants that could be satisfied by money only, and the Bantu had to sell something to get money. Living at a subsistence level, the only thing they could sell was their labour and, as we saw above, that is why we find them to-day on the mines and in the towns and on the farms. Most of the Bantu living in the Reserves to-day still largely practise subsistence economy. Except in some parts of the Giskei, and the Transkei, the land is held communally by the tribe and the chief allocates land

<sup>1</sup> British Bechuanaland is a part of the Cape Province and should be distinguished from the Bechuanaland Protectorate, which is governed by Britain.

for cultivation to the individual members of the tribe. The grazing land is common to all the individual stock-owners. There is practically no fencing and, indeed, where land is communally held, fencing would be a difficult matter. The kind of agriculture is, with few exceptions, primitive. The soil is scratched rather than ploughed, there is no rotation of crops; inferior seed is used, there is little fertilization of the soil; the ground is not properly prepared or cleared, weeding is done infrequently. In many parts the soil is 'doctored' magically before sowing and this is apt to take the place of more scientific farming. (Similar customs were formerly very common in Europe, and traces of them are found in many countries to-day.) As a general rule, the chiefs are ignorant and unprogressive and, through jealousy of any individual member of the tribe who may farm more progressively, do their best to prevent him from becoming too successful. The chief holds a special position in Bantu belief. He is really a link between the living tribe and their ancestors and is supposed by the primitive Bantu to have special magical powers. When ploughing takes place the chief's land must be ploughed first and harvesting may not be begun until the chief has given the sign.

The principal crops in the Reserves are maize and kaffir \*corn, and subsidiary crops are beans, pumpkins, ground-nuts, and sweet potatoes. In most of the Reserves maize is the chief daily food and kaffir corn is used more for making beer than as a staple food. The possession of cattle is, to the Bantu farmer, the real sign of wealth and social position. Cattle have a very important religious meaning for the Bantu, since they are supposed to be a link between the living and the dead. In ancestor worship cattle are sacrificed to appease the spirits of the dead. In the *lobola*, or marriage dowry system, and in marriage ceremonies, cattle play a special part. It is quite possible that, in the dim past, cattle attained a religious value because of their economic value, but to-day the Bantu do not regard their cattle primarily as an economic possession. They

use oxen for a little ploughing, but they seldom slaughter them except for ceremonial purposes ; they want plenty of cattle rather than a few good head of cattle. This produces what is perhaps the worst feature of the Reserves, overstocking. Overstocking and the absence of fencing are responsible for the impoverishment of the soil and for erosion. In many parts of the Reserves desert conditions are being created.

This kind of primitive subsistence economy is very wasteful. The waste was not a serious problem so long as there was plenty of land ; but European annexation, while depriving the Bantu of much of their former land, put a stop to tribal warfare and thus helped the population of man and beast to increase steadily. To-day bad agricultural methods and overstocking have reduced the carrying capacity of the Reserves to a dangerously low point. The Department of Native Affairs is doing something to improve conditions. Agricultural schools have been established and Bantu agricultural demonstrators travel about and try to persuade the people to improve their methods of farming and of stock-breeding. There are many difficulties in the way, however, such as the conservative nature of all farmers and especially of the primitive and superstitious Bantu farmer, the special beliefs about cattle, the communal ownership that makes fencing wellnigh impossible, and the absence of money. In some of the more progressive Reserves, credit societies have been started and agricultural shows are organized. A Government commission has recommended that a meat-canning factory should be set up in the Transkei to encourage the Bantu farmer to sell more stock and so reduce the load that the soil is expected to carry. The Reserves are really too poor to help themselves and much will have to be done by the Union Government to prevent them from deteriorating and the inhabitants from becoming poorer than they are. Continued impoverishment will be bad for the whole country, and South Africa cannot afford to let large tracts of country become denuded or to have a larger number of landless inhabitants.

In some parts of the Cape, individual tenure is allowed under what is known as the Glen Grey System, and each man may buy about 4 morgen<sup>1</sup> of land. Here conditions are slightly better. But these plots are too small for progressive farming and the occupiers are too poor to be able to fence properly. Also, so little land has actually been surveyed that thousands of Bantu want plots and cannot get them.

Agricultural labour in the Reserves is performed by men and women. Before the Europeans came, Bantu men were responsible for defending the tribe in war, for building the huts, for hunting, and for looking after the cattle; the women looked after the children and the house, and attended to the cultivation of the fields. To-day the men may not make war and there is practically no hunting. Also, the Europeans have introduced the Bantu to ox-drawn ploughs which the women cannot properly manage, and the men must go to the European centres to earn money for taxes and for other necessities. The result is that young boys look after the cattle, growing boys of fifteen and sixteen usually (though not always) do the ploughing, and the women cultivate the growing crops and do the harvesting.

As we should expect under a subsistence economy, there is little room in the Reserves for craftsmen such as builders, carpenters, and blacksmiths. Society is too poor under such primitive conditions to enable craftsmen to make a living. Most trading is in the hands of European traders, and a large proportion of the population of the Reserves is in debt to the traders. It should be remembered that the largest export with which the inhabitants of the Reserves must pay for the goods they get from the traders is labour. In some districts a very high proportion of the adult males is away at any one time earning cash wages. This is not very good for the Reserves, and it can be imagined what the results would be for a European town if, say, more than 50 per cent. of the fathers and elder brothers of that town had to travel hundreds of miles away from home in order to earn a living.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Morgen—2½ acres.

The kind of settlement in the Reserves differs in different parts of the country. Among some tribes there are little villages with huts close together; with other tribes the huts are scattered. The arrangement depends to a large extent on the social institutions of the tribe. The Bantu have different ways of reckoning relationship and where we think of a family as consisting of a mother and father and children their family may mean much more than that. Among the Nguni group of tribes, the definition of family or household is a most complicated one and it results in each household being considered as an independent territorial unit. Thus, among these tribes, we find the scattered type of settlement. Among the Sotho tribes, on the other hand, the households are grouped closer together and the result is a real village as Europeans understand the term. Among practically all the tribes the cattle kraal is the centre of the village. It is not only the place to which the cattle are brought at night, but it serves as a meeting-place for the men on occasions such as those when ceremonial sacrifices have to be made. Near the central cattle kraal is the council place, usually under a big tree, where discussions take place and where tribal justice is administered. The dwelling huts, each surrounded by a small courtyard, are scattered round this central feature of the village. The villages are mostly small, consisting of about a dozen huts, and are usually about a mile away from each other. It must be remembered that a village does not consist of a number of families, as reckoned by European custom, but of the members of one family according to the custom of the particular tribe. The head of the family in each village is the village headman.

The kind of hut built varies a good deal, but there are two main types. The Nguni tribes build huts by planting long saplings in a circle and then bending them inwards so that the whole hut looks like a hemisphere on top of a cylinder. The hut is then thatched with grass and one or more poles are planted in the centre to support the roof. The door is a semi-circular opening and the interior is usually plastered with mud

and cow dung. The Sotho, the Shangana-Tonga, and the Venda tribes construct their huts by planting poles in a circle and then plastering them with mud. The roof is shaped like a cone and is separately made, usually overlapping the walls of the hut. The floors are of earth plastered over with mud and cow-dung and the hut has a bigger doorway than with the Nguni. These huts are cheap to make and when they become verminous, or when the white ants invade them, or when a death takes place, they can be destroyed and new ones built without much economic loss. This renewal happens quite frequently. The huts are chiefly used as sleeping apartments and as storerooms. Inside a hut will be found articles like pots, bowls, drinking vessels, brooms, and other household utensils. Mostly these are home-made, though the manufactured articles bought from the European store are rapidly replacing the old home-made utensils. The people sleep on mats and have wooden head-rests for pillows. Calabashes are used for storing water and milk and conical-shaped soft baskets are used for straining beer. The fireplace is usually in the centre. Gardening implements, such as hoes and spades, stand against the wall of the hut.

The Bantu usually get up at sunrise and begin the work of the day. The women and girls fetch water and wood and attend to the household duties such as sweeping and washing the household utensils, the younger men will be out in the fields, usually quite close to the village, or busy with some manual work, such as building a hut; the young boy will be looking after the cattle. The older men will probably be at the village council place exchanging news and gossip, administering justice, or discussing village matters. The first meal of the day is usually taken at about ten o'clock, but the men who are out at work or at the council-place do not come back to the huts for it; the food is taken to them. As a rule, the meal consists of mealie porridge. In the late afternoon bathing takes place, and after that the real work of the day is done and the women begin to prepare the second or evening meal.

This also consists of porridge, but there may be some meat or vegetables. This is a family meal, as every one is now at home. After the meal they will probably sit round and talk and, perhaps, ask each other riddles, while the children are told stories of the past, or fairy tales, until everybody goes to bed.

As we see, the chief food for the two daily meals is maize. Small amounts of meat, poultry, eggs, milk, and vegetables are used, but, on the whole, the diet in the Reserves is badly balanced and many of the Bantu are undernourished. It is often found that when the men go to the mines they have to do light work for a while until they have been properly fed. Both the adults and the children in the Reserves show many signs of diseases that are the result of poverty and undernourishment.

The social life of the people in the Reserves has not yet been nearly as much influenced by European civilization as it has been in the urban areas where tribal life and tribal social ideas have been largely modified or even abandoned. The Reserves in the Cape Province have been longest in touch with European civilization and even there life is still lived largely according to old Bantu custom. This is even more true of the Reserves in the other Provinces. As with Europeans, Bantu laws and customs are a growth of centuries and were evolved through generations to meet the needs of society. European administrations have not always understood this in the past and sometimes laws and customs that appeared strange or unnecessary to the European were abolished, to the great detriment of Bantu society. To-day missionaries and governments are more and more realizing that there is a great deal in Bantu custom that is worth using as a foundation for more progressive laws. This is particularly true in the Reserves, where the influence of European customs has not been so strong.

Bantu children learn from their parents the knowledge that they need in order to live the kind of life that their parents are

living. They grow up learning a very great deal about herbs and animals and birds and they usually know far more about the habits of these things than European children do. They learn the customary methods of dealing with cattle and with crops. They gradually acquire a knowledge of the customs of their tribe, of what is considered good manners, of their family and social duties and rights. When the children reach a certain age they are taken with the others of their age and sex to an initiation school. Here they are given special and secret instruction in sex matters and in tribal lore and they have to undergo quite severe physical endurance tests. The initiation schools are accompanied by a good deal of ceremonial display and when the initiation period is over the boy or girl is admitted as a member of the tribe who is able to take a proper part in tribal life (In some parts of Africa missionaries have attempted to use these initiation ceremonies as a basis for more civilized and scientific instruction) Since the primitive Bantu agriculture is quite unscientific and unprogressive and since the Bantu do not know much about hygiene, the knowledge that is passed on to the children by the parents is not very helpful except for the limited life in the tribe.

Bantu parents are, as a rule, very fond of their children and, though they train them strictly in good manners, they seldom beat them. They frighten them with bogies and often the European is the bogy-man. The children have many games; some of them, such as hopscotch and hide-and-seek, have been taken over from the Europeans, but others are of Bantu origin.

The social life of the men and women in the villages is very simple. The day-to-day social life consists largely of conversation and gossip over a drink of beer. This is not at all unlike the social life of many agricultural communities in Europe. The day-to-day round is varied when there is a marriage, a birth, or a death, or when sowing or harvesting takes place. Then there are ceremonial dances and much beer-drinking. Among some tribes cattle-racing and hunting are popular, but



there is very little opportunity for hunting in the Reserves nowadays

The Bantu are very fond of songs and dances, and of stories and riddles and proverbs, and they get a great deal of their entertainment from these. They have their minstrels and their bards just as the people in Europe had during the Middle Ages. They use dance-rattles, drums, trumpets made from horns, reed whistles, and a large variety of stringed instruments. Their tunes have a strongly marked rhythm but not, according to European ideas, much melody. The songs deal with all aspects of life and death. There are lullabies, songs in praise of the chief, courting songs, wedding songs, working songs, hunting songs, and funeral songs. (It is interesting to note that a number of South African university students' war cries are based on Bantu war cries.) Songs for special occasions, perhaps to celebrate some great event, are made by professional song-makers. These songs are rather like long poems reciting the virtues of the tribe or the chief and they are chanted rather than sung. Bantu languages are very musical, so that a long recital of this kind is like a song and is usually very dramatic. The Bantu had no written language before the Europeans came, and their songs and stories were handed down from generation to generation. Their stories are very much like the myths and legends of Europe. They are very fond of riddles and proverbs and this is natural in a people that, until recently, had no written literature; the wisdom and philosophy of the tribe is expressed in short and pointed proverbs or riddles which are easily remembered.

The Bantu in the Reserves, and a great many of them outside the Reserves, believe in magic. Before we examine this statement, we must remember that they are not unique in this respect. All people try to account for the things that happen round about them and when they think they have done so they try to prevent the unpleasant things from happening to them. They notice that crops are destroyed by hail or by drought in one year or in one place and not in another and

they try to find out why this is so. Before the coming of scientific knowledge to explain these things, people invent good and evil spirits to account for everything that happens. It is only comparatively recently that European civilization has arrived at the scientific stage of knowledge and even to-day a very great number of Europeans believe in magic in various forms. We still see in the newspapers, from time to time, items referring to the practice of magic in the more backward parts of Europe. In South Africa many Europeans believe in the power of good and evil spirits and try to get themselves cured by magic rather than by science. If we bear these facts in mind, we shall be able to understand more sympathetically the existence of magic among the Bantu.

Since many of the Bantu believe in the existence of good and evil spirits that control the affairs of men, it is natural that they should try to control the spirits. This is done either by trying to please the spirits, as in the ceremonial slaughter of cattle or in harvest ceremonies, or by the special use of magic on the part of magicians or witch-doctors. These are people who undergo secret courses of training and who possess special knowledge; they naturally have a great deal of power over their fellow-men. The Bantu believe that magic can be used in a good and in an evil way. It is used evilly to bewitch people and to give them diseases or to cause them some other misfortune. It is used in a good way to avoid misfortune or to cure diseases. Diviners or 'bone-throwers' are the people who must find out why certain things have happened. They have a complicated system of rules, gained by long training and practice, by which they throw a specially selected set of bones on the ground. From the way in which the bones fall and lie they tell what has happened or what is going to happen. From this knowledge a remedy may be prescribed.

Bantu medicine is a mixture of medicine and magic, and the herbalists are the medical practitioners who use specially prepared herbs and doctor them with magic. It is, of course, true that herbs and plants contain the ingredients of many of

the medicines prescribed for us by doctors, and Bantu herbalists have a remarkable knowledge of the medicinal and curative value of these plants. They effect cures of all kinds of diseases and many Europeans who have lived among Bantu tribes use their prescriptions. Because the cures are so often mixed with magic, European scientists have usually dismissed them as superstition. They might very well disregard the magic and investigate the cures scientifically.

Wherever European civilization comes into touch with Bantu civilization the belief in magic will ultimately disappear. But the process is very slow, particularly where the Bantu are separated from the main mass of the Europeans. In the Reserves, European hospitals and schools and churches are gradually doing their work. A small proportion of Bantu children in the Reserves go to mission schools and learn the elements of European education. Bantu teachers and doctors are being trained and work among their own people. But there are not nearly enough schools and hospitals and doctors. Hundreds of doctors and school-teachers would be required to make it possible for every person who was ill to see a properly trained doctor and for every child to go to school. And many more hospitals and school buildings would be required to take the patients and the children. The Reserves are, however, too poor to pay for these themselves.

Besides education and religion and scientific medicine, there are other influences in the Reserves that are helping to break down the old ways of living. Motor-cars and telephones, other European machinery, European clothes, European and Bantu newspapers, are all eating away at the old tribal customs. The young men who go out to find work on the mines and in the towns come back with new ideas. In the Reserves the Bantu themselves distinguish between what they call the 'dressed' and the 'blanket' Bantu. There is a growing struggle between the new ideas and the old conservative ideas. While we may welcome signs of change for the better, we may well sympathize with the older Bantu, who deplore the passing of

old customs and complain that their children do not behave as children should. Also, we must not exaggerate the extent to which traditional Bantu society in the Reserves has broken up. In spite of all the influences at work, it remains true that the vast majority of Bantu in the Reserves are comparatively untouched by European civilization except in such outward matters as food and implements and clothing. Those who come back from European areas bring new ideas, but they are largely concerned with material things. Most of the people are still illiterate and superstitious and live in fear of spirits.

### *The Local Council System*

In considering the question of how the Reserves are governed to-day, it is necessary to distinguish clearly between the system usually known as the Council system and that of the Reserves where the Council system has not yet been introduced. In both cases, when we speak of how the Reserves are governed, we refer to local government; the general administrative system of the Union, as far as it concerns the Bantu, will be described separately. The Council was begun in 1894 by the Glen Grey Act of that year. By this Act there were set up two sorts of local government. In the first place, wherever there is a location of landowners a Location Board of three members is appointed by the Governor-General after the magistrate of the district has found out, at a public meeting, whom the landowners want. These Location Boards are chosen for one year and have certain duties connected with the control of watercourses, irrigation, grass-burning, and the regulation of common grazing ground. In the second place, the Glen Grey Act established a District Council for the whole of the Glen Grey district. This Council consists of twelve members, six nominated and appointed by the Governor-General and six nominated by the Location Boards and appointed by the Governor-General. The magistrate is Chairman of the Council, which is chosen for three years.

This Council usually meets once a month and its duties are to attend to the making and repairing of roads, the construction of dipping-tanks, agricultural improvement generally, afforestation, and public health. In order to carry out its duties, the Council receives all the quitrents paid in its district and has the power to levy a tax on land if this should be necessary. It will give some idea of the work and responsibilities of the Council if we realize that it has spent over £50,000 on road-making and keeps a permanent staff of road-workers; it has made and controls many dipping-tanks; and it maintains an experimental farm for the benefit of the landowners in the district. The annual revenue of the Council is about £10,000.

The Glen Grey system, with modifications, has gradually been extended to all the districts of the Transkei, and it is unnecessary to mention all the changes that took place at various times in the method of election, the functions of the Councils, and their revenue. Just one important difference between the original Glen Grey Council and its extension to the Transkei must be mentioned. In the Transkei there are no Location Boards. There are District Councils and there is a General Council. There are twenty-six District Councils, each consisting of the magistrate and six Councillors. Two of these Councillors are nominated and appointed by the Government and the remaining four are elected by the inhabitants, except in Pondoland, where the chiefs nominate two Councillors.

In addition to the District Councils, there is the United Transkeian Territories General Council. The Chief Magistrate of the Transkei is Chairman of this Council and the twenty-six district magistrates are members. Each district sends three Councillors, one nominated and appointed by the Government, and two nominated by the District Council. The chiefs of Tembuland, Eastern and Western Pondoland, and the Gcaleka chief, are also members. Since this Council represents more than 1,000,000 Bantu it is worth while to show in greater detail how it works.

The annual meeting of the Council at Umtata is called the *Bunga* and it takes place in a very fine building. Any matter affecting the welfare of the Bantu may be discussed and the debates are lively and of a high standard, because the members of the *Bunga* are well-informed on the subjects under discussion. After a debate a resolution is passed and this is sent to the Government or, if it is something which affects the Transkei only, it is acted upon by the Executive Committee of the Council. The matters which are usually discussed and decided upon are education, agriculture, Bantu laws and customs, roads, forests, common grazing grounds, and the revenue and expenditure of the Council. The Executive Committee consists of eight members, the Chief Magistrate, three other magistrates appointed by him, and four Bantu members elected by the Council itself. This Committee carries into effect resolutions of the Council and is responsible for the administration of the Council's affairs in such matters as the appointment of officials, public works, education, and agriculture.

The District Councils carry out the work of the General Council under the direction of the Executive. If a road has to be made in a district the General Council votes the necessary money and the District Council makes the road. The District Councils have no funds of their own and all the money for the work in the different districts must be voted by the General Council. The revenue of the General Council consists of a local tax of 10s. per hut and of all quitrents collected in Council districts. The annual revenue is about £185,000. This fact, and the following, will give some idea of the importance of the work done by the Councils. The General Council maintains over 4,000 miles of roads costing about £60,000 a year; it has constructed and maintains over 1,000 dipping-tanks; it maintains seven agricultural schools and demonstration farms; it employs Bantu agricultural demonstrators. These demonstrators, after having been trained at one of the agricultural schools, travel about the territories assisting farmers with advice, encouraging them to use better

implements, demonstrating the best methods of stock-raising and of sowing, organizing agricultural shows, and giving lectures. The Council also maintains fifty scholarships a year and helps to pay for the medical services of the territories.

From the above description, we see that the District Councils and the General Council have two main functions : to administer local government and to give the Union Government advice by acting as a link between the Government and the people of the territories. The Transkei system is very important in the study of the administration of the Bantu, because it is different from systems adopted in other parts of Africa. There have been various criticisms of it, such as that the magistrates have too much authority and that the Bantu are not really learning to control their own affairs ; that the Government ought to make much more money available from the general revenue of the country to deal with the many problems of soil erosion, health, and education ; that the Government asks the advice of the Council, but does not accept it. Even though there may be a certain amount of truth in these criticisms, it remains true that the Transkeian system has worked reasonably well.

The Native Affairs Acts of 1920 and 1927 made it possible to extend the council system beyond the Transkei and so strengthen local government in other reserves. Eight councils have been established in the Ciskei and since 1934 they have been linked through the Ciskeian General Council, over which the Chief Native Commissioner of the Cape Province presides. Unlike the *Bunga*, this General Council is constituted on a federal basis and is mainly dependent for its revenue on a contribution of 12½ per cent. of the income of each of its constituent Councils, amounting in all to only £4,000. This is due to the fact that the local Councils, such as Glen Grey or Herschel, which have the biggest revenue, have refused to adopt the centralized Transkeian system. Local feeling is still too strong in some districts to recognize that greater improvements could be effected and better technical services run at

smaller cost under a unified than under a federal system of local government.

Another eight Councils have in recent years been established in the Transvaal, notably in the Pietersburg, Potgietersrust, Lydenburg and Marico districts. These councils, which are really on a tribal basis, have been slow to develop. For one thing, most of the people have been in contact with western civilization for a much shorter period than have the Bantu in the Cape; and, secondly, the distance separating the various reserves is considerable, a factor that has also delayed the formation of the General Council which is at present being discussed.

There are also two local councils in the North-Western Cape and one in Natal.

In the Free State there are three Reserves, at Witzieshoek, Thaba 'Nchu, and Seliba, in the Thaba 'Nchu district. Here there are Reserve Boards of Management, consisting of a Chairman and Vice-chairman, who must be Europeans, and from five to seven Bantu members nominated and appointed by the Governor-General. These Boards may make regulations, subject to the approval of the Governor-General, on a number of local matters, such as water supply, afforestation, and grazing. The revenue of the Boards consists of a local tax of 10s per hut.

At the present time, however, most of the extensive Reserves of Natal and the Transvaal fall under the Native Affairs Department. This means that there are Chief Native Commissioners, Native Commissioners, and Assistant Native Commissioners for each area. They are appointed by the Governor-General and their duties are laid down by regulation. They are responsible for the administration of their area, for carrying out laws made by Parliament, for keeping law and order. They must travel through their districts, meet the chiefs and headmen listen to grievances, and keep the Government informed of all that takes place. They are responsible for tax-collection and have certain functions and, under them, those chiefs whom



the Government has appointed perform certain judicial and administrative duties

The Government has appointed about 1,700 chiefs, who have certain duties in exchange for the performance of which they get a small salary and are entitled to customary dues, such as first-fruits and beer. The chiefs are responsible for assisting in tax-collection, reporting crime or unusual happenings, and for allotting land to the individual members of the tribe. They and the headmen must assist the Government officials in explaining the laws to the people and in maintaining order. The chiefs have lost a great deal of their former authority because of the impact of European civilization. Many of the older people and quite a number of the younger ones are, however, still very loyal to their chiefs and would like to see some of their authority restored. But many of the chiefs are uneducated and unprogressive and, indeed, there is little incentive for them to be anything else, since European rule has undermined their authority while still holding them responsible for keeping order. Thus, though tribesmen are still loyal to their chiefs, they are becoming more and more critical of them, especially the tribesmen who have been for any length of time among the Europeans and freed from tribal customs. Under a recent law, the chiefs have been given certain functions in connexion with the election of Senators for the Union Parliament and of members of the Natives' Representative Council. This will be described in another chapter.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE BANTU ON EUROPEAN FARMS

IN describing the Native Reserves in South Africa, we saw how it came about that the Bantu formed the chief labour force of the country. As the land was settled by the Europeans, the amount of land available for the Bantu was steadily reduced. That, and other factors, forced the Bantu to seek employment

from the Europeans and to exchange their labour either for cash or for a place to live on. According to the Census of 1936, there are about 2½ million Bantu on European farms throughout the Union. Of these, almost half are in the Transvaal, and the remainder are fairly equally divided between the other three Provinces. Except for a comparatively small area of the Western Province of the Cape, we may say that the agricultural labour of South Africa is performed by the Bantu.

South African farms differ in size according to the climate and the kind of farming, and the number of labourers employed will also depend on this. Sheep and cattle farming would require less permanent labour than fruit or crop farming. The form of contract between the labourer and his employer varies, almost from district to district, and it would be impossible to give a complete account of it here. There are two main systems of employment, that in which a cash wage plus payment in kind is given, and that in which there is no cash wage at all. The amount given in cash and the value of the payment in kind depend on a number of factors, such as the nearness to the Reserves, the nearness to big towns or the mines, the value of the land, or the individuality of the farmer and of the labourer. Near to the Reserves it is easy to get Bantu labour cheaply, near to the big towns or the mines it is not. Many Bantu will prefer to work for a considerate and kind employer for less pay than they would otherwise accept. In other words, there is nothing like a standard wage in agriculture, not even in any one district.

It is very difficult to say what proportion of Bantu agricultural labourers work for cash wages and what proportion for wages in kind only. In many parts of Natal and the Transvaal there is a system of labour-tenancy where a man and his family are allowed to settle on a European farm, to graze cattle there and to cultivate a field; in return for this he and his family must perform a certain number of days' labour for the farmer. Sometimes it is ninety days a year and sometimes two days a week. The number of cattle that may be grazed will

depend partly on the amount of land available and partly on the value of the land in that area. During his free period the labourer will either hire himself for cash to the farmer or else go off to look for a cash wage elsewhere, probably in the towns. This system of labour is wasteful for the farmer, because it means that while he has a number of families on his farm he is getting labour from a proportion of them only. It is also bad for the labourer, because he gets no cash wage and his position is insecure. But at present it suits those farmers who have large farms, as in the North-eastern Transvaal, because they pay out no cash and they would not in any case use the land they are giving to their workers. It suits many Bantu, who do not so much want a cash wage as a place where they can keep their beloved cattle. As the value of land rises, the farmers will be forced to hire their labour for cash rather than exchange land for it. This is happening at the present time, and more and more farmers are finding it advantageous to pay cash wages plus some payment in kind. It should be mentioned that included in the number of Bantu on European farms is a fairly large number who live on the land of land companies in the Transvaal and pay an annual rent to the companies.

In most parts of the Orange Free State and in the Cape Province the system of cash plus payment in kind is in force. For an adult male labourer an average wage is about 10s. a month plus food, grazing for a number of cattle, and a couple of morgen of land to cultivate. Here the farmer hires his labour on a monthly or yearly contract. The food that is given consists chiefly of maize, though this varies a great deal with the individual farmer. Some farmers try to give their workmen a balanced diet which will include milk, meat, and vegetables. Most farmers, however, give maize and, perhaps, some skimmed milk. One result of this is that there is a great deal of stock theft on the farms. On some farms the workers can make extra cash by selling their surplus produce and on sheep farms they are usually paid extra for shearing. It is very difficult to estimate what the total cash value of the

labourer's wage is, partly because the amounts differ so much from farm to farm and partly because the value depends on such things as the current price of land and of maize. On an average the wages of a farm labourer are probably about £18 a year, of which £5 is in cash and the balance in kind.

Bantu workers on farms usually live about a mile away from the European dwelling-house. Their huts will be of the kind that they are accustomed to build and will often be near a fountain or a *spruit*. There may be perhaps four or five families on an average mixed farm of about 800 morgen, and these families form a little community of their own. All the men will be engaged on farm work, ploughing, milking, dam-making, gardening, reaping or shearing, while one or two of the women will be engaged to do domestic work for the employer and will sometimes be paid a small monthly wage for this. The other women will be at the huts looking after the children or attending to their homes, or else cultivating their own or the farmer's fields. Their life is not very much unlike the life in the Reserves, except, of course, that they are employed by some one else and are not working entirely for themselves. Their social life is very simple and monotonous. Usually there is a weekly beer-drinking party at their own huts or at those on a neighbouring farm. An occasional visit to the nearest town enables them to buy, or to barter for fowls or skins, the few simple things that they can afford. Many of them belong to Christian Churches and occasionally go to town for a religious service; but many of them are almost as untouched by European civilization as their fellows in the Reserves. On a few farms there are schools established by the Native Education Department. The Bantu, and especially those who have been in contact with the Europeans for some time, are beginning to realize the value of education for their children, and this is one of the reasons why they move into towns to look for work. Farmers are realizing this, too, and the Education Departments are receiving an increasing number of applications from farmers

for the establishment of farm schools. Some Bantu parents send their children to stay with relatives or friends in town so that they can go to school. The vast majority of parents and children on farms are illiterate. Magic and superstition play a large part in their lives, though to a decreasing extent. It is difficult for them to keep up tribal customs on the farms, and those who have been on European farms for any length of time are losing their tribal loyalty. The extent to which this happens depends partly on the distance of the farm from their original home in the Reserves. When they work near to the Reserves, the parents some times send their children home for the initiation ceremonies.

The kind of work done by the Bantu workers on European farms is often of a responsible nature. All the hard manual work is done by them, sometimes without much supervision. But they are also entrusted with the more delicate tasks such as separating the cream, butter-making, marketing and skilled mechanical work. Taking into account their lack of training, the Bantu show a remarkable aptitude for all kinds of skilled labour, and farmers would often have to pay much more for such work if they had it done at the nearest town. Repairing motor-cars and agricultural machinery, mending shoes, doing odd carpentering jobs—all these things are often part of the work of a Bantu labourer more skilled than his fellows. As a rule, such a labourer gets a slightly higher monthly wage.

Bantu names are often very confusing to the European and difficult to pronounce, so that both on the farms and in the towns they usually take a European name, by which they are known to their employers. Often they were unable to think of a name, so the employer gave them one. That is why so many Bantu men have names which are really nicknames, like 'August', 'September', 'April', 'Sixpence', or 'Kleinbooï'. Bantu workers are usually called by their first names, unlike European workers, who are called 'Mr. Smith', or by their surname, just 'Smith'. The Bantu are beginning to resent this custom because it seems to imply that they are being

looked down upon. In the towns educated Europeans when talking to educated Bantu now call them by their Bantu names and add the prefix 'Mr'

When the Bantu first began to work on European farms the early Boer farmers treated them patriarchally—that is, in a stern but kindly fashion. The workers were very often brought into family prayers. But this tradition has almost entirely died out, and though the relation between the farmer and his workers is very often friendly and leisurely, as befits life on a farm, it is much more a business relation than it used to be. There are, too, a number of points of friction between the European farmer and his Bantu labourer. Where the labour-tenancy system exists, the contract is seldom a written one, and there are innumerable disputes between the farmer and the labourer as to exactly what was included in the contract. This is probably the cause of most of the cases under the Masters and Servants Acts, which will be described in a subsequent chapter. Again, the farmer and his labourer, as a rule, do not understand each other's language or customs, and this is a frequent source of friction. Under this system, too, the farmer makes a contract with the head of the family and sometimes the younger members go off to the towns without the permission of the head. The farmer then accuses the labourer of having broken the contract. Bantu parents complain that their authority is undermined because their children have to take orders from the farmer, and yet the farmer holds them responsible for the children's actions. Since the farmer and his labourer will be doing the same kind of farming, requiring concentrated work at particular periods, such as reaping or sowing, there will naturally be disputes and ill feeling as to whose work must be done first. That is one of the disadvantages to the Bantu workman of payment in terms of land. Another disadvantage is that he depends for his living on one crop and if that fails he will have to buy food. Some farmers are generous in this matter and supply maize if there has been a crop failure, but the system leaves the worker at the mercy of the individual

farmer. Most farmers, in such cases, lend money to the labourer and many Bantu workers are in debt to their employers. Here, again, they are at a disadvantage, because, if they want to look for work elsewhere, they must first persuade their new employer to pay their debts to the old one. The Bantu worker is further handicapped in that, before he may look for work elsewhere, he must obtain a pass from his employer. Many of them try to evade this and risk imprisonment in their efforts to find other work. In 1936 there were 62,000 convictions in the courts for evasion of pass regulations.

In recent years there has been a strong tendency for Bantu who have been agricultural labourers to migrate to the towns, and farmers are constantly complaining about a shortage of labour. This 'drift to the towns', as it is called, is largely due to the more attractive conditions in the towns. The Bantu labourer hopes to get in the towns better pay for his services, education for his children, better housing, more social amenities, and a better diet. Also, as land becomes more valuable, farmers are able to offer less grazing land, and it is this grazing land that is the most attractive thing to the Bantu cattle owner. It seems likely that, as farmers are faced with a shortage of labour and as they cannot afford to increase the amount of grazing, agricultural wages will rise and farmers will begin to train their labourers to be more efficient. At present the Bantu, although he can work hard and continuously, is a very leisurely worker, and there is not much incentive to him to work more rapidly. This does not matter to the farmer as long as he can get plenty of labour cheaply; but with the increasing wages that the urban industries are beginning to pay, the farmers will, in self-defence, have to alter their labour policy to one of fewer workers, more pay, and greater efficiency.

In 1943 the Native Affairs Department, with the aim of making farm labour more attractive suggested that certain, minimum standards be laid down, if possible by law, but at least by agreement among the farmers of the same district. These standards would cover wages, food, housing, hours of

work, and daily tasks. The Department would then employ labour officers whose duty it would be to assist the more progressive farmers in getting the others to conform to these standards. Minimum standards of this kind are imposed on industry and mines by the Native Labour Regulation Act of 1911, but political pressure from the farmers would probably prevent such a law being applied to agriculture.

### CHAPTER 3

#### THE BANTU IN EUROPEAN TOWNS

IN describing the life of the Bantu worker on the farms, we saw that there was a tendency for the Bantu to migrate to the towns. Between 1921 and 1936 the Bantu population in the towns has more than doubled itself, and in 1936 there were over 1,000,000 Bantu people in the European towns and on the mines. By 1943 the number must have increased to at least 1,500,000. The number in each town varies according to the European population and according to the geographical position of the town. In the Western Province of the Cape there are very few Bantu, their place being taken mostly by Coloured people. For the rest of South Africa we may say that, as a general rule, there are as many Bantu as European inhabitants in any town except where there are mines and industries, and there the Bantu population is larger than the European. In the bigger towns of Natal there are fewer Bantu and proportionately more Asiatics.

In the vast majority of cases every South African town consists of two distinct and separate townships, one for the European and one for the Bantu. The best way to find out what a Bantu township looks like is to visit one. Conditions vary so much from place to place and from province to province that a complete description would be impossible here. But a description of some of the general features will enable us to form a mental picture of the whole. When you leave the



poorer quarter of the European town and walk for about half a mile or more you begin to come to the outskirts of the Bantu township. At once you notice differences as compared with the European quarter. The houses are small and badly constructed ; sometimes they are mere corrugated-iron sheds. The streets are poor, badly kept, and very dusty. There are very few trees and no parks, there are no big public buildings except the churches, of which there are many ; here and there we see a small but better-built house and, occasionally, an attempt at a flower garden. But the general impression is one of squalor and poverty and dustiness unrelied by any of the amenities of civilization. In some of the bigger urban areas the Bantu township may have a cinema hall, a recreation ground, a few school buildings, street lamps, and some attempt at tree-planting. In these towns, too, water is laid on to public taps, but it is seldom laid on to the houses and in many of the smaller towns the Bantu inhabitants have to walk more than a mile for every drop of water they use. In one location there is one  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch tap for over 200 inhabitants. In one or two towns there is water-borne sewage, but in the vast majority the pail system is used.

All over the world, the question of housing urban populations is a very important one. The poorest sections of the community can seldom afford to build their own houses, and municipalities everywhere, in Europe and in America, are faced with the problem of providing suitable and cheap houses for the mass of the working population. In South Africa, too, this is the case. The Urban Areas Act of 1923 (to be described in a later chapter) places the responsibility for the provision of housing for the Bantu on the shoulders of the local authority—that is, the municipality. But by the time this Act was passed most locations were already in existence. The municipalities have therefore had to do two things : get rid of the old houses that were bad and insanitary and provide new ones. This enormous task has only just been begun, and it is true to say that, at the present moment, the majority of Bantu

inhabitants of European towns live in unsuitable houses.

In this business of providing houses, the municipalities have been faced with the fundamental difficulty that the Bantu are too poorly paid to be able to afford high rents, and, consequently, houses must be cheaply built. In some towns in Europe the local authorities have come to the conclusion that the only way to provide houses for the poorest people is to charge a sub-economic rent, that is a rent that is too low to pay the interest on the money spent. In such cases the richer people pay higher rates to make up for the difference. In South Africa, however, the municipalities have usually tried to make the Bantu townships pay for themselves. Because of this, and because of the low wages of the Bantu, the rehousing schemes have not got very far yet. In a number of the larger towns a number of the Bantu live, not in separate areas, but in slum areas in the European quarter. In all the towns the Bantu township is largely a slum area. That means that the houses are insanitary and overcrowded. In some parts, chiefly in the big towns, five and six people to one small and badly ventilated room is quite a common condition.

Where the local authorities have undertaken the work of rehousing, there have been two main methods. In Bloemfontein the Bantu mostly build their own houses while the municipality constructs some for hire. Where they build their own houses the municipality advances materials up to the value of about £35. The owner of the house probably makes his own bricks and builds the house in his spare time. The loan is repaid gradually by monthly payments. Such a house may have four rooms, each about 12 feet by 12. In other towns, such as Johannesburg, the municipality usually builds the houses and rents them to the Bantu. One mistake that was made with this scheme was to use highly paid European labour. The result is that the capital cost of the houses requires a rent that is more than most Bantu workers can afford. Wherever municipalities begin to plan new Bantu townships, they try to avoid the old mistakes and they provide for open spaces and for halls

and other public buildings. One very important point that has to be borne in mind is the distance of the Bantu township from the place of work of the inhabitants. Most of the old settlements of Bantu near to European towns and villages are several miles away from the place of work and the tendency of the newer townships is to be even further away. Unless cheap transport is provided, this is a very great hardship for people who have to be at work at an early hour. Where transport has been provided, as at Cape Town and Johannesburg, it adds a considerable amount to the workman's monthly expenses.

In the housing of the urban Bantu, there is, therefore, a great variety of conditions. Some municipalities have made good progress in clearing away the old slums and building good new houses; in most towns, however, the work of rehousing according to a proper plan is going very slowly and, meanwhile, the old slums continue to exist. The vast majority of the Bantu do not own their own houses, but hire houses or rooms from the municipalities or from other Bantu owners. They do not, in any case, own the land on which the houses stand, since they may not own land in European areas.

Inside the houses we find an equally great variety of conditions. In many cases the furniture is very poor. When four or five people live in one room there is not much space for furniture. What furniture there is, is usually cheap—perhaps a broken-down bedstead, some very old chairs, and a box-table. There will also be the usual household utensils like pots and pans and cheap crockery. Occasionally we find among the more educated Bantu who are drawing higher wages houses that compare favourably with those of the Europeans. These houses will have good furniture, some pictures and books, and perhaps a gramophone or a piano.

In most South African towns probably the majority of the Bantu are employed as domestic servants, and they are often housed with their employers in rooms separate from the main building. In some towns Bantu women are the domestic servants, while in other towns the men do this work. In all

towns the men are employed as shop-messengers, gardeners, brickmakers, and on unskilled and semi-skilled labour in building, road-making, daubing, and a number of other trades and occupations. Practically no European workman is without his Bantu assistant. In the larger towns, where industries are located, the Bantu are increasingly being drawn into the secondary industries as semi-skilled workers. As technical improvements are made in industrial processes, the need for skilled workers of the old kind grows less. In most factories in Europe and America the workers do not have to serve a long apprenticeship as they used to forty years ago; and, having worked in one factory, they can quite easily work in another. This is becoming increasingly true in South African industries and, since Native labour is cheaper than European labour and can be trained just as rapidly, it is natural that an increasing number of Bantu will find employment in these industries.

The wages and conditions of labour in the towns, as on the farms, differ from town to town. In practically all domestic service the wage is not purely a cash wage. It includes food and lodging, of which the value is difficult to estimate. In some of the bigger towns, like Johannesburg, a domestic servant earns £4 or £5 a month plus board and lodging, but the average cash wage is probably about £1 per month. The number of hours worked depends entirely on the employer and in most cases they are very long, probably eleven or twelve hours a day. Most servants have an afternoon a week off and occasional holidays, but this again depends entirely on the employer.

In the industries the general rule is for a cash wage to be paid, and where food and lodging are included, this is optional and the worker may provide his own if he prefers. The average wage in industry is round about £1 5s. per week and this sum sometimes includes board and lodging. Most workers in industries work about six and a half days per week and the number of hours per day is not always fixed by law. Nor does the law provide for paid holidays, and these will depend on the good-

will of the employer and on the kind of contract made between the worker and his employer.

It is important to notice that the gap between the wages of unskilled Native and skilled European labour is very large. Usually the European skilled worker gets about six times as much as his Native semi-skilled or unskilled assistants. The result of this is that employers try to employ as many Natives as they can. Bantu wages in the towns tend to remain low because there is a constant inflow of labour from the Reserves. A proportion of this inflow is still temporary labour and comes into the towns just to earn a small amount of cash before returning to the Reserves. Such Native labourers can therefore afford to work for lower wages than the permanent urban labourer. At the same time, as we saw, the amount of skill required for industry is becoming less in a large number of occupations and the Native can acquire this skill very rapidly, in many cases within six months. Thus the Native from the Reserves competes on a lower wage scale with the urbanized Native and he, in his turn, competes with European labour of all kinds. The European workers have, usually, strong trade unions to protect their wage standards, but the Natives have only just begun to combine effectively for this purpose. Also, European law and custom have been able to prevent the Native from competing with Europeans in the skilled occupations, with the result that they are unable to reach skilled wages, while their semi-skilled wages are kept low by competition from the unskilled labour from the Reserves.

To understand the value of the wages earned by the Bantu in towns, we must know what has to be paid for out of wages and what the wages can buy. In several towns of the Union, cost-of-living budgets for Bantu families have been made, and these put the actual expenses of a family of five in one of the bigger towns at about £7 10s. per month. This figure includes rent, food, taxes, clothes, and a few sundries. Even though these budgets are reasonably accurate, they represent what the family actually spends and not what it ought to spend for

proper health and development. . We may take it as certain that the big majority of Bantu in towns neither receive as wages nor spend on food the proper amount for a healthy existence, and most doctors who have had extensive dealings with urban Bantu say that malnutrition is widespread.

There is one very important point about wages and expenditure, and that is that a Bantu family of five usually spends more than the income of the head of the family, whose wages are insufficient to allow him to support his family. The result of this is that, very often, both the father and the mother are out at work, and this has serious disadvantages for the children whose parents are away for perhaps twelve hours during the day and come home tired at night. The children are neglected and family life ceases to exist.

Most of the articles that the Bantu buy they get from European stores. They are too poor to do much trading on their own account. In some of the bigger towns they have tried to go in for co-operative trading and in the Witwatersrand and Johannesburg locations there are about 500 shops owned by Bantu. On the outskirts of all European towns there are small shops owned by Europeans who very often employ Bantu salesmen, here most of the Bantu trade is done. The quality of the goods bought is naturally very poor, with such low wages, and this means that they have to pay, in the end, more than people who can afford to buy good articles. In the Free State, as well as in other provinces, the Bantu are allowed to take out hawkers' licences and to open eating-houses where tinned foods, cigarettes and tobacco, and fresh food may be obtained. In one or two towns there is a Bantu market.

The Bantu in the towns have learnt to drink tea and coffee, but their favourite drink is still kaffir beer brewed from sprouted corn.<sup>1</sup> If this is properly brewed, it contains much nourishment and about twice as much alcohol as ginger-beer; it also provides yeast for breadmaking. Europeans have for a long time taken up the attitude that the Bantu must be

<sup>1</sup> Kaffir beer looks rather like gruel and the taste is not unlike that of cider

allowed no strong drink at all, and in many towns beer is prohibited, though it is brewed illegally. In those towns where it is allowed, each family is permitted to brew a certain amount per day, or, otherwise, the municipality undertakes the brewing and sells the beer in municipal beer-halls. The profits from beer-halls go for the improvement of the Bantu town. The Bantu themselves, however, much prefer home-brewing because, they say, their womenfolk are the only ones who know how to brew it properly. European alcoholic drink may not be sold to the Bantu, and this has resulted in a very large illicit trade in liquor and also in the manufacture by the Bantu themselves of strong concoctions made by adding such harmful ingredients as raw spirit, carbide, and even boot-polish to kaffir beer. In the big towns this has become quite an industry and women do it to increase the family income. The trade is very profitable and is carried on in spite of police vigilance. There are tens of thousands of convictions on account of illicit liquor dealing and this probably represents a fraction only of the total trade.

Whenever a number of people live together in one area, it is to be expected that they will create social institutions for their leisure hours. The Bantu are employed for long hours; they have not much leisure. Nevertheless, in most Bantu towns will be found, on a much lower and poorer scale, some of the social institutions that Europeans have. Particularly in the larger towns will be found football, cricket, and tennis clubs; sometimes there will be a cinema, and, occasionally, a social club to which only a small proportion, representing the more educated Bantu, will belong. The sports clubs have names such as 'The Black Lions', 'The Early Rose', and 'Perseverance'. The Bantu have not yet learnt how to organize properly and very often these clubs split up owing to petty jealousy and bad organization.

There is not sufficient provision in the shape of playing-fields and equipment for the recreational needs of the town Bantu and, in some big towns, the absence of healthy sport

leads to the formation of *amalayita* gangs of toughs. To get rid of these disturbing gangs, it is essential for the municipality to organize sport for the Bantu inhabitants, so that they can have a healthy outlet for their energies. Some municipalities are now taking steps in this direction by the appointment of trained Bantu social workers.

Because of the absence of proper lighting and the expense of candles and lamps the Bantu usually do what Europeans used to do in similar circumstances--go to bed early. But they do have concerts and dances and tea-parties as the Europeans do. Probably the biggest centres of social life are the churches. For various reasons, which will be dealt with in a later chapter, there are many more divisions among the Bantu than among the European Churches and, in addition to the missionary branches of the European Churches of South Africa, there will be found a large number of unattached churches, often with very queer names. Most of the inhabitants belong to one or other of these religious institutions. The churches are important, too, because of the part they play in regard to education and social-welfare work. Education is not compulsory, as it is for Europeans. In nearly every town the majority of children of a school-going age are not at school. Since both parents are often away at work, the children grow up uneducated and uncontrolled and with very little idea of a law-abiding community life. In the Reserves the parents, especially the mothers, had time to look after the up-bringing of their children, who learnt good manners and their duties towards their families and their people. A great deal of this is missing in the towns, and the Bantu townships will become increasingly lawless unless a proper system of education for all the children takes the place of the old tribal traditions. In some of the more progressive towns, Europeans have started creches to look after some of the smaller children of mothers who are away at work. There are also Wayfarer and Pathfinder detachments for girls and boys, and various European societies try to provide some social outlet for the children's



energies. But all these attempts touch only the fringe of the problem

It is only in a few of the big towns that special medical provision is made for the Bantu inhabitants. In those towns there is a Native Dispensary with a European doctor in charge, assisted by two or more fully trained Bantu nurses. Here Bantu patients can have minor ailments attended to, but for anything serious they would have to go to hospital. At the General Hospital they can be treated free of charge if they are sufficiently poor, but as soon as their income is above a certain small amount, they have to pay. In all the hospitals under public control there are separate wards for Europeans and Bantu and, if we leave out the mine hospitals, there are only a few thousands beds available for Bantu patients in all the hospitals of the Union. Since the Bantu suffer much from diseases associated with poverty, the death-rate among the urban Bantu is high and the infant mortality is much higher than among Europeans.

It should be clearly realized that in most South African towns a large proportion of the Bantu population is now permanent and no longer looks forward, as in the old days, to a return to the Reserves. The Bantu townships, therefore, are permanent features of South Africa's social and economic life. A large number of the inhabitants of the towns know no other home. These permanent urban Bantu very largely follow European fashions in dress and amusements and in social and economic ways of living. The Bantu who wish to work for Europeans must be properly and tidily dressed else they would not get employment. No European would have a Bantu employee who was dressed in a blanket. The Bantu have to learn the European languages and have to adapt their lives to European standards. They have to work to a clock instead of to their own time. They have to accommodate themselves at every turn to European ideas.

A very important result of the permanence of the Bantu urban population is that an increasing number of men and

women live in the towns, not to take service with Europeans, but to serve the various needs of their own community. Thus there are shoemakers, builders, carpenters, nurses, teachers, ministers, and, very occasionally, doctors, who make a living by supplying the wants of their own people. These Bantu are often the leading people in the town and occupy the better class of house. There is a Bantu middle class growing up in the urban areas and, though they are small in number, they form a very important section of the community. They are the natural leaders in the towns of those Bantu who have discarded their tribal allegiance.

While the Bantu in the towns are adapting themselves to European conditions and while it seems as if, eventually, tribal tradition and loyalty will pass away for the vast majority of townsmen, it is not yet true to say that the urban Bantu have no tribal connexions. We must remember that there is still a constant flow to and from the Reserves. In spite of the difficulties of observing tribal customs under the money economy conditions of the towns, many of these customs are still observed in a modified form by a large number of Bantu people. Thus, birth, marriage, and death ceremonies are still frequently observed. The marriage dowry has been adapted to the money economy and, instead of cattle, money is paid, though this largely destroys the social value of the *lobolo* system. Many Bantu parents send their children to the Reserves for the initiation ceremonies, since these cannot easily be observed in town. Chiefs from the Reserves often send councillors to visit their tribesmen in the towns so as to keep in touch with them and, frequently, to collect presents from them. But tribalism, based as it is on the Bantu conception of the family and the village, is bound to be weakened in the towns, where economic conditions compel people to adopt a more individualist conception of the family and its obligations towards its members. Probably tribalism has been most weakened in the larger towns and is still fairly strong in the smaller villages. Although it is impossible to speak accurately about the extent

to which tribal loyalties have broken down in urban areas, it will be evident that Bantu society in the towns is undergoing very severe strain in its efforts to adapt itself to European ideas.

Just as tribalism has not yet broken down, magic and superstition have by no means disappeared among the urban Bantu. Many of the tribal superstitions are still current, even among those Bantu who are members of a Christian Church. Magic has adapted itself very easily to the new needs in the towns, and superstitious Bantu will buy 'medicine' to prevent unemployment, to escape the police, and to avoid other unpleasant things. The herbalists, too, do a good trade in the towns where, as we saw, hospitals and medical aid were insufficient for the needs of the population, or, where, as often happens, the Bantu distrust the European doctors or the hospitals.

Bantu townships are administered by the European municipalities under the Native Urban Areas Act. By this Act any town that has been proclaimed an urban area must appoint a Manager of the Bantu township and must keep a revenue and expenditure account separate from that of the European township. The appointment of the Manager is subject to the approval of the Minister of Native Affairs of the Union Government; so, too, are all regulations concerning the Bantu township made by the Town Council. The Manager or, as he is usually called, the Superintendent, is assisted by a staff of officials and is responsible to the Town Council. There is usually a sub-committee of the Town Council, called the Committee for Native Affairs, which is responsible for suggesting changes or proposing new regulations. The Town Council must let the inhabitants elect a Native Advisory Board of which the Manager is, as a rule, chairman. This Board meets at regular intervals and all proposed new regulations must be submitted to it for discussion and resolution before they are sent to the Minister of Native Affairs. The Boards are advisory and have no power to make or to alter regulations; but where the Town Council is anxious to have

the goodwill of the Bantu inhabitants, it will take notice of what the Board says. Under the Native Representation Act of 1936, which will be described in a later chapter, the Advisory Boards have a new and important function in the matter of electing a Senator to represent the Bantu and in electing members of the Native Representative Council for the whole Union.

The Town Councils have wide powers for regulating and controlling the affairs of the Bantu town. They make regulations concerning housing, sanitation, lighting, water, passes, curfew, streets, and markets, and they have power to levy certain taxes. The local taxation in towns varies greatly. Usually there is a sanitary and water rate, a flat rate payable by all householders. Then there are lodgers' fees payable by the householder who hires out rooms. Another source of revenue for some Bantu towns is a tax on the European employer of labour for every male Bantu that he employs. All the local taxes paid by the Bantu inhabitants amount to between 15 per cent and 20 per cent of their monthly wage. The Town Councils also have powers to control the entrance of Bantu people into towns. Any one entering a town must get a pass to look for work from the Native Pass Office and if no work is found within a reasonable time the pass is withdrawn and he must leave the town. Naturally, with big population, it is impossible to control this completely.

In the towns the Bantu are subject to European laws, and the courts that they come into contact with most are the magistrates' courts for petty offences. In 1936 about 20,000 serious crimes were committed by Bantu people and of these about 6,000 were stock theft. The fact that there are about 6,000,000 Bantu in the Union and that the number of serious crimes was 20,000 bears out what most people who have had dealings with the Bantu say, that they are a very law-abiding people. The petty offences for which the urban Bantu come before the magistrates are of the kind that are due partly to poverty and partly to ignorance; or they are offences against

laws that do not apply to Europeans. In 1936 there were 68,000 convictions for being in possession of kaffir beer; 63,000 for not having paid Poll Tax; 62,000 for not being in possession of a pass, 57,000 for contravention of municipal or Location regulations, and 30,000 for contravention of the Masters and Servants Acts or the Native Labour Regulations.

When Bantu people are brought before the magistrates they are often at a serious disadvantage. They are not familiar with European legal forms, they often do not speak or understand either English or Afrikaans fluently; they are too poor to employ legal aid; the magistrates are very busy and have not always the time to investigate cases fully. The courts are usually a long way off from a man's home or from his place of work and, since he has to spend much time waiting for his case to be tried, he loses time from his employment. Again, the fines that the magistrate may inflict are very heavy in proportion to his wage and so he has no alternative but to go to prison. It must be remembered that a fine of £1 or £2 may represent nearly a month's wages to the Bantu.

In most towns there are Bantu policemen who work under the direction of the European police force. These police are recruited from different towns from the one in which they are stationed and they are often rather ignorant men who have very little idea of what their real duties as guardians of the law are. Both European and Bantu policemen are often unsympathetic towards the Bantu, and, in big towns where the Bantu population is dense and police work difficult, they sometimes use methods that are harsh and violent.

It is clear, then, that the Bantu who live in European towns or who come there to work for a while have to adapt themselves to conditions that are very different from those that they are accustomed to in the Reserves. In the process of adaptation, they are faced with a host of difficulties and discouragement—difficulties of language, laws and regulations, social habits, and economic conceptions. And, at the same time, they have to be hard at work doing a great many unaccustomed

things. They learn remarkably quickly, when we consider the disadvantages, and are soon in charge of responsible work in domestic service or in industry. European employers entrust them with their children, their food, their money, their animals, and their machinery, and, on the whole, they respond very well to their responsibilities and are cheerful and trustworthy workers.

Europeans seldom distinguish between uneducated and educated Bantu, and the men or women who have attained to a certain standard of European civilization are self-conscious and are easily hurt in their feelings by what they consider to be unjust or discourteous treatment. These educated Bantu have a hard fight to maintain and to improve their standard of living and culture, and they feel isolated from their own people and from the Europeans to whose standard of civilization they are aspiring.

How bad the general conditions of life of urban Natives are to-day was frankly disclosed by an official committee of inquiry, whose conclusions were embodied in the Smit Report in 1942. This Report was written on the assumption that Natives are now a permanent part of the urban population. The official recognition of this fact alone marks a new stage in public attitudes to the Native. The committee was deeply impressed with the poverty of the Native people in urban areas. It proposed to ameliorate their position by more, cheaper, and better housing on sub-economic lines; by granting old-age pensions and other forms of poor relief; by expanding the inadequate medical services, by providing elementary education for *all* Native children in the bigger centres; and by a plan of communal feeding. It also suggested that the central Government should keep a stricter eye on the finances of local authorities because many a municipality runs its Native Revenue Account in such a way that the cost of Native welfare is a burden on the Natives themselves.

In recent years the wages of workers in the larger towns have risen considerably, thanks mainly to determinations laid down

by law after inquiry by the Wage Board. Most of the Bantu employed in industry or commerce now get £5 a month or more and a number receive over £6. Against this must be set the fact, accepted by the official inquiry in 1942, that the minimum amount of £7 14s. 6d. is needed by a Native in town, with a family of five, to house, feed and clothe them decently.

#### CHAPTER 4

#### ON THE MINES

THE mining industry of South Africa has been built up on a plentiful supply of cheap Bantu labour. Without that indispensable labour, the industry would not be nearly so important a source of wealth to the country. The number of Bantu at work on the various mines of South Africa differs from time to time and depends on the market demand for the mineral in question. There are on the Witwatersrand gold mines about 360,000 Bantu miners and 41,000 Europeans. On the coal mines of the Transvaal, Free State, and Natal, and on the diamond mines and diggings, there are usually another 120,000 Bantu workers. Of the Bantu on the gold mines just over half come from the Union; about one-fifth come from the three Protectorates; about one-quarter from Portuguese East Africa; and the remainder from other African areas. Johannesburg is thus a labour centre for the Bantu from all over southern Africa.

The reason why so many of the mine-workers come from outside the Union is that the Bantu do not, as a rule, like the work on the mines and do not go there unless economic conditions force them—that is, unless they cannot get cash wages in other work or unless they cannot support themselves in the Reserves. For many years the mines were not allowed to recruit Bantu labour from countries north of the twenty-second parallel of south latitude. This was because the Bantu from those tropical areas could not stand the changed conditions,

and died in great numbers. With the boom in gold-mining, the demand for labour has increased so greatly that the mine-owners have been able to persuade the Government to relax this rule. They point out that medical research into such matters as feeding and treatment, and the improved conditions on the mines, have considerably reduced the risk in recruiting from further north. Various people have pointed out that if the mines can get unlimited labour from outside the Union, the wages of the Union Bantu will continue to be low.

There are three ways in which a man may get work on the mines. He can go to Johannesburg by himself and find work on any mine that needs labour, and for any length of time, from one to six months. Most of the Bantu, however, obtain work through one of the recruiting agencies. For the gold and coal mines in the Transvaal there are two big recruiting corporations of which all the mines are members. The one that recruits Union and Protectorate labour is the Native Recruiting Corporation, Ltd. It has its head-quarters in Johannesburg and branch offices in all the areas where it is likely to get labour, particularly in the Reserves and in the Protectorates. As will be seen presently, the labour force on the mines is not permanent, and there is a constant supply coming from the Reserves and the Protectorates. The agents are told from head-quarters how many labourers are required each month and they then try to persuade as many men as possible to come forward. In the Transkei the agents are usually the traders, and they receive a bonus of £1 4s. for each recruit obtained. This system naturally makes the traders anxious to obtain recruits, and it is not unknown for traders to lend money to possible workers, so that they will be compelled to go to the mines in order to pay their debts. In some cases young men are persuaded to go without their parents' permission or knowledge.

There is another scheme, known as the Assisted Voluntary Scheme, which is more and more being used by the Bantu. Under this Scheme a man goes to the recruiting office in the



Reserve where he lives, and, if he is accepted for the mines, he is given an advance of his rail fare plus £2, some of which will subsequently be deducted from his wages. The advantage of this scheme is that the worker now ranks as non-recruited labour and can choose to which mine he wants to go.

The Portuguese Government does not allow active recruiting in its territory, but the Witwatersrand Native Labour Association, the second big recruiting corporation, has agents and stations in Portuguese East Africa, and those Bantu who want to go to the mines go to the nearest agent and are then passed on. Under the Mozambique Convention with the Union Government, the Portuguese Government limits the number who may go in any one year and makes certain stipulations as regards payment and length of service.

At the recruiting office in the Reserves or in the Protectorates the men are medically examined. Work on the mines is very hard and about 25 per cent of those who apply are turned down as medically unfit for such work. Those who are accepted must sign a long and complicated contract in which the number of shifts to be worked and the amount of pay are stipulated. They do not really understand this contract and, in any case, most of them cannot read or write. But Bantu have been going to the mines for such a long time that by now the conditions are widely understood, and those who are going get all the information they want from those who have been. When the contract has been signed, the worker is put on a special labour train with hundreds of other workers, he is given rations for the journey and a blanket. About five of these crowded trains reach Johannesburg every week. The supply of labour is more plentiful in times of drought or depression, and in January and February there will be more trains than usual, because these are the months when food is most scarce in the Reserves.

When the train arrives at Johannesburg the new recruits are taken to a central depot, where the terms of the contract are explained to them by an officer of the Native Affairs Depart-

ment ; here, too, they are medically examined, their clothes are fumigated and their finger-prints are taken. After that they are drafted to whatever mine requires them and they undergo a third medical examination. Then they are given a number and a pay-book, and after a short rest, their work on the mines begins. We must try to imagine the sensations of these Bantu who have been accustomed all their lives to pastoral conditions in the Reserves and are now plunged suddenly into a highly developed industry. The train journey in itself was a nerve-racking experience. Then comes the roar and bustle and traffic of a great city. Everything is strange and unlike anything the man has ever experienced before. Here he is no longer treated as a member of a village, but, with hundreds of strangers, as a number. Finally comes the alarming experience of being rushed down in a cage into the bowels of the earth to work hard and long, in cramped and awkward positions, at a job in which there is always danger from falling rock or from some accident connected with machinery. There is constant noise and shouting and everything must be done to time. Fortunately for the Bantu worker, he always finds men of his own race and tribe working on the mines, and this companionship helps him to get over some of his worst initial fears.

The contract under which labour is engaged on the gold mines varies. Voluntary labour may have contracts of from one to six months. Recruited labour must stay for 270 shifts, which means, in practice, about eleven months. Portuguese labour is recruited for twelve months or more, but may not stay for longer than eighteen months at a time. As a rule, the miner will stay for about eleven months and then return to his home for a period of rest. The mines are anxious for those workers who have some experience to come back, so they offer small monthly bonuses to those who will return within six months. Having signed a contract, it is a crime for a Bantu worker to break it. Over 5,000 per year desert and about half of these are caught and punished.

The Bantu worker underground has usually an eight-hour day. Working under a European 'boss', these miners do the heavy work of digging and shovelling and drilling. Under the Mines and Works Act, which will be described in another chapter, they may not do certain skilled work, such as blasting and engine-driving. No matter how skilled they become at mining, therefore, they are unable to reach the best-paid posts. One reason for this is that the European trade unions want to keep the best-paid jobs for Europeans, and are afraid that the Bantu will drive them out of the mining industry if they are allowed to do skilled work. Another reason that is often given is that the Bantu have not sufficient sense of responsibility to do work on which the lives of other people may depend. It should be noted, however, that in Northern Rhodesia Bantu miners are allowed to do blasting work, and in the Belgian Congo they become engine-drivers and do all kinds of engineering work without endangering the lives of the people working under them. In the Union, too, the Bantu do all kinds of responsible work in connexion with machinery.

The average cash wage of the Bantu miner is about 2s a day. From this should be subtracted, however, the expenses he had in getting from his home to the mines. Sometimes this is as much as £5, which reduces his cash wage for the eleven months by about 3d. a day. In addition to his cash wage, he gets food and lodging, free medical attention, and a certain amount of free entertainment and social amenities. European wages on the mines are very much higher and the comparison can best be seen by saying that the average monthly wage of the Bantu worker is £3, while that of the European is over £30. In thinking of the value of the wage, the risks involved in the work must be taken into account. Mining is an occupation subject to serious risks from accident and also to a disease known as 'miner's phthisis'. If a Bantu miner has an accident that permanently prevents him from working, he is given a lump sum as compensation. The mines are bound by law to compensate him if he gets phthisis, but, here again, the amount

is smaller than the European worker gets. The mines try to reduce accidents by various safety devices, by having classes in first-aid, by showing warning films, and by broadcasting lectures. By these means the death-rate from accidents has been reduced to 2.05 per 1,000. The death-rate from disease is 6.25 per 1,000. This means that about 2,500 Bantu workers lose their lives every year through mining. When we add the number of those who lose arms or legs or fingers, we realize that the risk attached to mining considerably reduces the value of the wage paid.

In most mines there is a system known as the deferred pay system. This is a voluntary system by which the miner receives only a part of his wage at the mines and the rest is paid out to him when he returns home. This has many advantages, and the chief one is that the worker is unable to waste his money in Johannesburg and thus to arrive home with nothing to show for his work. This frequently happens to those who have not deferred their pay. With the Portuguese miners, the Portuguese Government makes it a condition that half of their wages must be paid out in Portuguese territory. One reason why so many Bantu workers do not make use of this scheme is that, according to them, their parents or relatives take all the money from them when they get home. The Basutos particularly do not much like the deferred pay system.

On the gold mines the Bantu workers are housed in compounds or barracks. There are, on the Witwatersrand, about sixty such compounds, in each of which there may be from 1,000 to 5,000 workers. The compound consists of a quadrangle of brick buildings. Inside these are rows and rows of cement bunks for sleeping; usually there are two layers of bunks. Each compound has its own kitchen, where food is prepared by Bantu cooks. The Government lays down by regulation the minimum amount of food that each worker must get and the mines themselves try to secure a balanced diet for their workers. The usual daily ration is . 24 oz. mealie meal, 6 oz. bread, 3 oz. peas or beans, 2 oz. peanuts or  $\frac{1}{2}$  oz. fat, 5 oz. vegetables,

$\frac{1}{6}$  oz. coffee or cocoa with sugar ;  $3\frac{1}{4}$  lb of meat with salt is given per week. This diet is much better than that enjoyed by most Bantu on farms or in the Reserves and when they return from the mines they are, normally, in much better physical condition than when they left home. On the Kimberley mines the workers are given lodging, but buy their own food at the stores of the mining company. Here their cash wage is, of course, much higher than on the gold mines.

The compound system has as a result the separation of men from their families for periods of ten or eleven months at a time. This is bad for the men and for the families in the Reserves. A good deal of the agricultural work in the Reserves must be done by women and young boys, while the men on the mines are unable to lead healthy home lives. On the copper mines in Northern Rhodesia and the Belgian Congo the authorities encourage the mine-workers to bring their families with them and to build their own houses and gardens on mine property. This is much healthier, and it gives the mines a more constant and permanent labour supply, besides doing away with a good deal of the expense of recruiting. The mine-owners on the Witwatersrand say they are unable to do this, because the numbers they employ are too large and land is too expensive to use for laying out villages. On some of the Witwatersrand mines provision has been made for a small number of married men, but there is room for only a negligible proportion of the total number employed.

The compounds on the Rand are controlled by compound managers with the assistance of Bantu policemen. A great deal of the happiness of the worker depends on the character of these men, with whom they come into daily contact, and the mines are careful whom they appoint, because they are anxious to have contented workers. The mines make a certain amount of provision for the leisure hours of their workers, and give a great deal of financial assistance to mission societies and other welfare associations who work among the Bantu on the mines. There are night schools, regular cinema shows,

athletic sports, first-aid classes, and concerts. There is also a good deal of gambling and dancing and beer-drinking, which leads to private or tribal fights. The mines usually keep the different tribes separate, but practically every week-end there is a tribal fight with more or less serious results. In spite of what the mine-owners do to provide social amusement for the workers, there is not enough to occupy their leisure time. Conditions are so different from the family and tribal life to which they were accustomed in the Reserves that many of the Bantu workers become wild and reckless in their behaviour. Their good manners deteriorate.

The Department of Native Affairs keeps administrative and judicial control over the Bantu on the mines. There is a Director of Native Labour for the whole of the Witwatersrand area and under him are three Commissioners and many inspectors and other officials. These officials visit the mines periodically and try petty cases, more serious cases go before the ordinary courts. Fines inflicted for petty offences, such as disobedience to instructions, may be deducted from the worker's wage.

On such days as they are free, the workers may obtain a pass and go into Johannesburg. Most of them make use of this and very often spend their wages on buying goods from the stores just outside the compounds. These stores give credit very easily, and, very often, at the end of his contract, a Bantu worker may find that he has to go on working in order to pay his debt to the storekeeper. If he does not go to the store, the Bantu miner will go to the slum areas of Johannesburg, where he may find a shebeen. These are illegal, but they make such big profits that they can easily afford to pay the fines that are inflicted if they are caught. The beer-halls are run by Bantu women who, as a rule, sell kaffir beer that has been very much 'doctored'. These drinking and gambling dens are very bad for the young Bantu who come straight from the simple tribal life in the Reserves.

In spite of his contact with highly modern industrial

methods, the Bantu on the mines cannot be said to have become detribalized to the same extent as the urban Bantu. On the mines tribal customs and traditions are much stronger than in the towns because the miner is there for a comparatively short period before he goes back to the Reserves. The urban Bantu is gradually getting to the stage where he knows no other home than the town in which he lives. Yet in many ways the mines have a more disintegrating effect on tribal life. The Bantu in the towns are painfully adapting themselves to a new civilization different from that in the Reserves. The mine-worker is unable to adapt himself in so short a time, and he usually picks up more of the evil than of the good of European civilization. This he takes back with him to the Reserves. In estimating the value of the gold-mining industry to South Africa, we must not forget to take into account its devastating effect on Bantu life in the Reserves.

## CHAPTER 5

### LEGISLATION AND LAW

IN describing the existing conditions of the Bantu in South Africa, it was necessary constantly to refer to, without further description, certain of the laws by which they are governed. In South Africa there are many laws that apply solely or chiefly to the Bantu, and it will be convenient to give a brief description, in one chapter, of some of these laws. Before doing so, however, it is necessary to know something of the administrative machinery that was set up at the time of Union for carrying into effect legislation that specifically concerns the Bantu population.

#### *(a) Department of Native Affairs*

The various European governments that conquered and annexed Bantu territory in the nineteenth century almost always found it convenient to set up special administrative

machinery for governing their new subjects. Usually this took the form of calling the Governor of the colony, or, in the case of the South African Republic, the State President, the Supreme or Paramount Chief of the Bantu and of giving him such powers of law-making as a Supreme Chief was supposed to have under Native law and custom. In the Cape Colony the Governor had all the powers necessary, but he was not called Supreme Chief because the Cape policy was to break down the powers of the Bantu chiefs. Each of the two Republics and the two British Colonies had its own Department of Native Affairs and, with the exception of the Cape Colony, made large use of the chiefs and headmen in their administration. It should be noted that the European governments very frequently credited the Supreme Chief with far more power than he really had under Native custom. This was partly due to ignorance of what the custom actually was and partly because it was convenient to have autocratic power concentrated in the hands of the Native Affairs Department. In normal tribal conditions the chief very seldom had autocratic powers, but was controlled by his council and by his tribe.

When Union was constituted in 1910, these principles of administration were preserved. Powers which were previously vested in the Governors were now vested in the Governor-General of the Union, and, by a later Act, the position was clearly defined when he was called the Supreme Chief of the Bantu of Natal, the Transvaal, and the Orange Free State. It must, of course, be clearly understood that the Governor-General acts constitutionally according to the principles of responsible government and, therefore, only on the advice of his ministers. The Minister of Native Affairs is responsible to Parliament for the Department of Native Affairs.

The functions of the Department are considerably wider than those of other Departments of State. It has, unlike other Departments, to look after all the interests of the Bantu and, in the Reserves for example, it combines all the functions



of government that are, for Europeans, split up into various single departments. In the Reserves it has to preserve law and order, promote education and agriculture, settle disputes according to Native custom, administer local finances, regulate the occupation of land, collect taxes, and, most important, make regulations governing all these various functions. In addition, the Department must administer a large number of Acts that deal specially with the Bantu population in European areas. It is understandable, therefore, that if the Department has to attend to a variety of things that would normally fall under separate Departments, special powers will have to be given by Parliament to the Minister of Native Affairs to make laws by regulation rather than by the usual procedure of legislation. This was done by the Native Administration Act of 1927 (and amendments) which was based on the experience of the pre-Union departments and on that of the Native Affairs Department since 1910.

This very important Act gives the Minister of Native Affairs very wide powers to make laws by proclamation for all Native areas. He has the right to alter any existing laws, such as the Natal Native Code, he may make a law applicable to one particular area only; he may alter the existing pass regulations, he may declare new tribal boundaries and order tribes or sections of tribes to remove from one area to another, generally, he may make laws for the order and good government of the people. Proclamations under this Act have dealt with such subjects as irrigation, soil erosion, dipping of stock; the prohibition, in certain areas, of public meetings without the permission of the magistrate; the application of the principle of collective responsibility for stock theft or damage to dipping-tanks; and the limitation of the number of donkeys that may be kept. Unless there is urgency, all proclamations must be published in the *Government Gazette* one month before coming into operation; also, all proclamations must be laid on the Tables of both Houses of Parliament, and Parliament may, by resolution, alter or repeal any proclamation.

Practically all the laws affecting the Reserves are thus made, not by Parliament, but by proclamation of the Governor-General. This form of government is very convenient because it removes a great deal of detailed and intricate legislation from the sphere of parliamentary control, where enough time could not be devoted to it, and places it in the hands of a Minister who has the advice of expert officials. Further, it is flexible and enables Government to differentiate between tribes that may be at different stages of development. The objections to it are that it places arbitrary power in the hands of the Department of Native Affairs, and such power is liable to abuse.

The personnel of the Department of Native Affairs consists of a Secretary, an Under-Secretary, and a large number of other officials. Among these officials are the five Chief Native Commissioners, Native Commissioners, and Assistant Native Commissioners, who are stationed in the Reserves or in European areas where there are large numbers of Bantu. Outside the Reserves the magistrate of the district, an official of the Department of Justice, is usually the Native Commissioner. There are also a number of special officials such as the Director of Native Agriculture, the Director of Native Labour on the Witwatersrand, and a number of Inspectors of Native Labour.

One other body must be mentioned in connexion with the Native Affairs Department. By the Native Affairs Act of 1920 a Native Affairs Commission was instituted to consist of five members. The duties of the Commission are to consider all proposed legislation concerning the Bantu, to travel through the country and to acquaint itself with Bantu conditions, to conduct special investigations, and to advise the Government on all matters concerning the administration of the Bantu. The Commission must submit an annual report to the Governor-General and where it disagrees with the Minister regarding any proposal it has the right to lay its views before Parliament. In deciding how the money of the Native Trust must be spent, the Minister must consult the Native Affairs Commission.

*(b) Taxation and Finance*

At the time of union each province had its own system of taxing the Bantu and this was kept up till 1922, when Parliament passed an Act by which Provincial Councils were prevented from taxing them. In 1925 the Natives Taxation and Development Act was passed placing the direct taxation of the Bantu people throughout the Union on a uniform footing. By this Act there was instituted a General Tax, usually called the Poll Tax, of £1 per year payable by every adult male Bantu, and, in addition, a Local Tax of 10s. per year payable in the Reserves only by every male occupier of a hut, unless he holds land under the quit-rent system in the Transkei. Those Bantu men who have sufficient income to pay income tax are exempt from the General Tax. An adult male Bantu means a male between the ages of eighteen and sixty-five, and Native Commissioners may grant exemptions to men who are physically unable to work or who are too poor to pay. The General Tax is payable by the 1st of January in each year, and after the end of August any one who has not paid is liable to arrest. The tax receipt must always be carried by the taxpayer, because the police have powers to demand the receipt and failure to produce it leads to arrest. The usual punishment for having failed to pay the poll tax is a fine or imprisonment and after that the tax is still owing.

When a Native has been convicted of non-payment of tax, the Native Commissioner can force him to take work at the rate of wages prevailing in the district. The Native's employer can then be compelled to deduct in instalments the amount of tax due, provided that he leaves the Native enough to maintain himself and his dependants. The amending Act of 1939, which introduced this method of obtaining the tax, was intended to keep tax defaulters out of prison.

The poll tax represents a high proportion of the cash income of the average Bantu taxpayer and he is taxed no matter how small his income is. There are thousands of arrests a year for

failure to pay tax, but a certain number of Bantu manage to escape paying for years. The Bantu also pay many ordinary indirect taxes such as licence fees, the tax on cigarettes, and customs duties. Taxation therefore absorbs a much greater proportion of Native incomes than it does of European.

In recent years a larger and larger proportion of the poll tax has been earmarked for Native education. In 1943 it was decided that the whole of the proceeds of the tax should be devoted to this purpose, a sum of about £1,380,000. In addition, since 1922, a fixed annual sum of £340,000 has been granted from general revenue. But the development still necessary in Native education is such that a much larger grant-in-aid must come from general revenue if expansion is to continue. It would be best to base this grant on the cost per head of the number of children in average attendance, as is done in European education.

The Native Trust and Land Act merged the old Native Development Account in the new S.A. Native Trust which it established. The Trust's total income amounts to roughly £2,500,000 every year. Of this sum, £1 million is, as we said earlier, earmarked for the purchase of new land. About £1,250,000 is devoted to education. This leaves only a small amount, coming from tenants' fees and rents and other minor sources, for improving the reserves.

### *(c) The Native Trust and Land Act*

It was pointed out in a previous chapter that, by the Land Act of 1913, Parliament laid down the policy of separate areas for European and for Bantu occupation. Various attempts to set aside more land for Bantu occupation failed, but in 1936 Parliament passed the Native Trust and Land Act. By this Act, in the first place, a South African Native Trust is established. The functions of the Trust are to acquire land for Native settlement, to develop such land, to promote agriculture in Native areas, and, generally, to advance the material, moral,

and social well-being of the Bantu. To do all this there is a Trust Fund, which gets money from the sale or renting of land, from various fees and fines, and, lastly, from grants made by the Union Parliament

The principle of a Native Trust is an old one, having been established in Natal in 1860. The idea was that if tribal lands were invested in a Trust they would be more secure and less likely to be alienated from the Bantu tribe in question. Also, the Trust could have a Fund which would be able to develop the land more efficiently than a number of individual Bantu would. The Natal Native Trust and the Zululand Native Trust are now merged in the South African Native Trust.

The second object of the Act was to limit the amount of land that the Trust may buy or that individual Bantu or small groups of Bantu may buy. The limit mentioned in the Act is  $7\frac{1}{2}$  million morgen of land. This land will all be adjacent to existing Reserves and on some of it Natives are already living. The money of the Trust Fund has, to begin with, been largely spent on buying new land from its present European owners. The land so bought will become, for practical purposes, Reserves where Europeans may not own land. When the full  $7\frac{1}{2}$  million morgen have been bought, the Bantu will have about 13 per cent. of the surface of the Union as land where they alone may acquire rights of ownership.

From the time the Act came into operation until the purchase of land was suspended in 1941 owing to the war, Parliament granted nearly £5 million (at the rate of £1 million a year). But with this sum only about 1,414,000 morgen were bought because excessive prices were paid for the farms. It is clear that the sum of £10 million originally promised will not be enough to buy the 7 million morgen contemplated.

The Trust lands are administered by the Native Affairs Department which lays down strict rules and regulations designed to prevent the tenants from ruining the new land by bad farming methods. No tenant, for instance, may cut down the trees in protected areas. These rules have met with oppo-

sition, especially in the Northern Transvaal. So has the rule that no tenant may plough more than five morgen of land, which the Native peasants regard as too small an area.

The Act also deals very fully with Bantu on European farms. It limits the number of labour-tenants that any European farmer may have and makes them subject to the masters and servants laws. A labour-tenant is one who gives his services in exchange for the right to occupy land on a farm, and there are a great many labour-tenants in the Transvaal and Natal. In those provinces, too, there are a large number of squatters who occupy land and pay a small rent to the owner, but who do not give service in exchange for land. The Act forbids the registration of new squatters and lays down a scale of fees to be paid by the owner of the farm for every registered squatter at the time the Act was passed. These fees are heavy and they are obviously designed to do away with squatting altogether. In future, therefore, only those Bantu who are registered as servants or as labour-tenants on farms, or who are registered as employed in urban areas, may live outside the Reserves

*(d) The Representation of Natives Act*

When the old Cape Colony, in 1853, was granted representative government, Europeans and non-Europeans alike were allowed to vote<sup>1</sup>. In the Transvaal and Orange Free State Republics, on the other hand, only Europeans could become citizens. In Natal non-Europeans were allowed to have their names on the voters' roll, but on such conditions that very few of them were ever enfranchised. When Union was established, it was decided that the franchise laws as they were should continue in force after Union and that the vote of the Bantu in the Cape Province could be removed or altered only by a two-thirds majority of both Houses of Parliament. The Bantu in the northern provinces were thus unrepresented in

<sup>1</sup> There were, however, property qualifications which excluded the large majority of the Bantu

the Union Parliament except for the fact that four of the Senators appointed by the Government were supposed to have a knowledge of the needs of the Bantu. Sometimes, however, these appointments were made on a party-political basis without reference to the interests of the Bantu population.

In 1936 the Representation of Natives Act was passed. By this Act the Bantu voters of the Cape retain their vote, but on a separate register. They elect three European Members of Parliament and two members of the Cape Provincial Council. In the second place, all the Bantu of the Union elect four Senators. For the purpose of this election, the country is divided into four electoral areas: Natal, the Transvaal and Free State as one, the Transkeian Territories, and rest of the Cape Province. The Senator for the Transkei is elected by the Transkeian Territories General Council. For the other areas they are elected, not directly by the Bantu taxpayers, but by an Electoral College which consists of recognized chiefs, Native Advisory Boards, and Bantu elected by taxpayers on European farms or living outside a location. Each of these is called an electoral unit and the units make up the Electoral College of the area. Each unit has as many votes as there are taxpayers in the area of that unit. Thus a chief might have 6,000 votes, or a Native Advisory Board in a town 500. The first elections under this Act were held in 1937, and the second in 1942.

The Act also provides for a Native Representative Council, which consists of twenty-two members. Of these the Chairman is the Secretary of Native Affairs and the five Chief Native Commissioners are *ex officio* members. The Government appoints four Bantu members and the remaining twelve are elected in much the same way as the Senators are—three for each electoral area. The Council meets once a year in Pretoria and its functions are advisory. Any bills affecting the Bantu population which the Government intends introducing into Parliament must first be sent to the Council for its opinion and advice. The Council can discuss any matter

affecting Bantu interests. The Minister of Finance must consult the Council on any financial measure affecting the Bantu and also on the money to be spent from the South African Native Trust Fund. The Council may also recommend legislation to Parliament or to Provincial Councils. The first elections for the Natives Representative Council also took place in 1937, and the second in 1942. Councillors are paid a salary of £10 a month<sup>1</sup>

(e) *The Native Urban Areas Act*

The Urban Areas Act of 1923, and subsequent amendments, was made in order to provide for improved conditions and control of the Bantu, who, in steadily increasing numbers, were migrating to the European towns. Before that time there were various Acts that governed the lives of urban Bantu, but they were inadequate to deal with the growing problem. The Act of 1923 adopted what was already a recognized principle, that Bantu and European settlements should be separate. Further, it placed the full responsibility for housing and for administration on the shoulders of the local authority or municipality. This authority is exercised subject to the control of the Minister of Native Affairs. The urban authority must set aside land for a location, appoint officials to manage the location, select, or arrange to have elected, a Native Advisory Board; it must keep a separate Native Revenue Account, and money raised by taxation in the location may not be used for the benefit of the European inhabitants. All regulations which the local authority may make, including the questions of revenue and expenditure, are subject to the approval of the Minister of Native Affairs.

The Act further provides for regulations to be made regarding the manufacture and sale of kaffir beer, curfew regulations,

<sup>1</sup> The working of the Act is more fully discussed by various writers in the booklet *Political Representation of Africans in the Union*, published by the S.A. Institute of Race Relations in 1942.



permits to live in the location, and permits to look for work. It empowers the local authority to make regulations prohibiting more Bantu from entering the location and for removing those who have no employment or who are 'idle and dissolute'. The municipality may allow trading by Bantu in the locations.

In 1937 further amendments were made in the Urban Areas Act, which gave the local authorities and the Government still further powers to remove Bantu who are unemployed. These amendments were partly due to the shortage of farm labour and to the belief that many of the town Bantu were unemployed and should be made to work. Municipalities can now be compelled to take a census of the Bantu population in their area every two years and to estimate the labour requirements of the town for the coming two years. The surplus unemployed population may then be removed.

The Act regarded the Natives as merely temporary residents in the towns. It prohibited them from acquiring the ownership of a plot of land in a location and of securing trading rights in urban areas outside a location. In the twenty years that have elapsed since this legislation was first passed, it has become clear that the big majority of Natives in the towns are permanently domiciled there and there is now a strong demand from Natives for greater rights to acquire fixed property in urban areas.

#### (f) *The Pass Laws*

Before Union, pass laws existed in the Orange Free State, the Transvaal, and Natal. In the Cape Colony there were no pass laws, except in the Transkei, where any person entering or leaving the Transkei had to be in possession of a pass. The original object of the pass laws was to be able to control the movements of Bantu and to protect farmers against vagrants who might steal stock or do other damage. Since every male Bantu had to be able to produce a pass when requested, the authorities were better able to detect unauthorized wandering.

When the Bantu began to come to the towns, and especially to the industrial areas, the pass system was extended and was used as a method of detecting desertion, identifying Bantu, and tracing the families of men who died. Practically all these laws are still in force to-day, and they considerably restrict the movement of the Bantu and are bitterly resented by them.

A pass is a piece of paper on which a man's employer or a Government official states that he has permission to go from one place to another. If he cannot produce his pass when requested to do so by a police official, he is arrested and he may be fined or sent to prison, since this is a criminal offence. Before a man may take a railway ticket from a rural area, he must produce his travelling pass.

Various attempts have been made to produce some order into the pass system, which has become very complicated. In many centres a Bantu male must be in possession of six different passes and the absence of any one may cause his arrest. An Inter-Departmental Committee reported to the Government in 1920 advocating a very much simplified pass law for the whole of the Union with the exception of the Cape Province. The Native Economic Commission recommended in 1932 that the report of this Committee should be acted on, and several members of the Commission advocated that the pass laws had served their purpose and could now safely be abolished. So far, however, nothing has been done to act on the recommendations of these two Government commissions, except that the pass laws were somewhat relaxed on the Rand in 1942.

Those who favour the pass laws say that they are a means of preventing crime and desertion, and those who oppose them say that they are a needlessly expensive way of keeping law and order and that the police force could be much better employed. Finally, they maintain, the fact that the lack of a pass is a criminal offence tends to make criminals of otherwise law-abiding people.

We must distinguish between the ordinary pass system

which restricts the movement of men from one place to another and the night pass which is in force in all towns. By these pass regulations, no Bantu male may be in the European quarter of the town during certain specified hours of the night (usually 10 p.m. to 4 a.m.) without a pass from his employer. In the Cape Province this is the rule, too, except that it does not apply to Bantu who are registered parliamentary voters. It should be noted, too, that Europeans may not enter the Bantu township without a permit.

The Government may grant exemption from the operation of the pass laws to certain people, such as teachers, ministers, court interpreters, and other professional men. Of course, this means carrying a letter of exemption instead of a pass and, unless the man is well known locally, he may still be stopped and asked to produce his exemption certificate.

*(g) Industrial Legislation*

*(i) Acts regulating Native Labour*

Ever since the Bantu began to take service with the Europeans, the various governments in South Africa have passed laws to give the employers effective control over their servants. In Natal in 1850, the Cape in 1856, the Transvaal in 1880, and the Orange Free State in 1904, laws were passed that are known as 'masters and servants laws'. These laws apply chiefly to farm labourers and to domestic servants, because, when they were passed, there were practically no industries in South Africa. Their chief aim is to make it possible for masters to prosecute their servants in a criminal court for a breach of contract. Such a breach may be insubordination, refusal to carry out a specified piece of work, absence without leave, carelessness when in charge of stock, and a variety of other things. Among Europeans breach of contract is a civil and not a criminal offence. Contracts of less than one year need not, under these laws, be made in writing, and the absence of a written contract is a very serious cause of dispute between mas-

ters and servants and probably leads to most of the many cases that now come before the courts. Most of these cases occur on the farms. In the towns they are frequently settled out of court.

One of the results of these laws is that the Bantu may not organize a strike, because absence from work is a criminal offence. It is, in practice, hard for Bantu workers to combine and to use the strike weapon that European trade unions have found so effective in bettering their conditions of work.

Under the Masters and Servants Act the masters also have certain obligations. They have to carry out the terms of the contract as regards wages, grazing land, arable land, and food. If they break the contract it is a civil offence. In practice, however, the Bantu hardly ever take their employers to court for breach of contract. Either they are ignorant of the law, or else, in the absence of a written contract, they are afraid that the master's word will be taken before theirs.

The relations between the employer and the worker in such industries as mining are regulated by the Native Labour Regulation Act of 1911. By this act the Director of Native Labour controls the issue of recruiting licences to agents, he controls the conditions under which Bantu workers are employed, fed, and housed, and he may, in certain circumstances, cancel contracts. Under this act, as with the masters and servants laws, breach of contract is a criminal offence. The Native Labour Regulation Act protects the worker very much more than the Masters and Servants Acts do.

The Native Service Contract Act of 1932 amended, for the Transvaal and Natal, the existing laws in such a way as to prevent the Bantu from squatting on undeveloped land and to compel them to enter into contracts of service with European farmers. It also allows the magistrate to sentence a servant to a whipping for the breach of a contract.

## (ii) Industrial Legislation

There are two Acts that deal with the question of wages and conditions of labour in industries. The Industrial Concilia-

tion Act provides machinery whereby employers and workers can settle disputes by means of Industrial Councils without necessarily resorting to strikes and lock-outs. The Act excludes Natives from its operation. But if an Industrial Council reports to the Minister that it has reached an agreement on the question of wages, and that such an agreement would be defeated if Bantu workers were used in the industry at the lower rates, the Minister may extend the agreement to the Bantu for that industry. They have thus had their wages fixed for them by an Industrial Council on which they had no representation, except through one official of the Department of Labour. The Industrial Conciliation Act is really intended for the organized skilled industries.

In order to provide for unorganized European and Native labour, the Wage Act was passed in 1925. This establishes a Wage Board of three members whose business it is to investigate, and report to the Minister on, the conditions in industries where the workers are not organized. The Wage Board comes into operation when the Minister instructs it to investigate an industry or when employers or workers in that industry apply for an investigation. The Board reports to the Minister, who may then make a wage determination. The Act does not apply to domestic servants or to agricultural labourers or to government employees.

The Wage Board has done much by its decisions to raise the wages of Natives employed in industry.

### (iii) The 'Colour Bar' Act

There still exists a great deal of confusion in the minds of most people about the 'Colour Bar' Act. The real name of this Act is the Mines and Works Amendment Act of 1926. In 1911 an act known as the Mines and Works Act gave the Government power to make regulations regarding the granting of certificates of competency in certain skilled occupations in mining and engineering works generally. In 1923 the Government used this power to make regulations by which Euro-

peans only could obtain these certificates of competency and the courts declared these regulations *ultra vires*. In 1926, under very strong pressure from the European trade unions, Parliament rectified this by passing the amending Act, which was nicknamed the 'Colour Bar' Act. Under this, new regulations were made by which certificates in such occupations as blasting, engine-driving, and other skilled mechanical work might be granted to Europeans, Cape Coloured, Mauritius Creoles, and St Helena persons, but not to Bantu. So far the Act has been applied to the mines only.

In South Africa there is, of course, a good deal of colour bar legislation, because any laws that distinguish between people because of their colour may be called 'colour bar laws'. Such laws as the pass laws, for example, may be called 'colour bar laws'. But when people speak about the colour bar in South Africa they are usually thinking about those laws and customs that restrict the Bantu in an economic sense. The trade unions, for example, for the most part enforce the colour bar in their unions, having secured its inclusion in the Industrial Conciliation Act, because they want to ensure that the jobs with high wages are reserved for European skilled workers. When the Bantu think about the colour bar they think chiefly of laws and policies which prevent them, no matter what skill they may acquire, from obtaining good jobs in skilled occupations. The Economic and Wage Commission in 1925 condemned colour bar legislation in industry as uneconomic and bad for the country. More recently, in 1935, the Industrial Legislation Commission did the same. The Native Economic Commission of 1932 defended colour bar legislation on social and political, rather than on economic, grounds, though two of its members dissociated themselves from this view.

#### (h) *The Recognition of Native Law*

In addition to all the special laws that affect them, the Bantu come under the ordinary laws of the Union. Thus the laws regulating the relations of employer and workman or of land-

lord and tenant normally apply when the parties concerned are Natives just as they do to Europeans.

Certain relationships, however, among the Bantu themselves, arising mainly out of family law, are peculiar to them and cannot be adjusted in terms of the ordinary law of the land, for instance, disputes about the payment of *lobolo* or bride-price. It was primarily to deal with such cases, but also because it would be more convenient to hear separately civil cases between Natives in which no European was concerned, that a special system of courts for Natives was established.

Under the Native Administration Act of 1927 Native chiefs, mainly in Natal and in the Transvaal, were given the right to hold *chiefs' courts*. They hear only petty cases arising out of the Native customs observed in their tribe.

The Act also set up in every district a *Native Commissioner's Court* with roughly the same powers as a magistrate's court. Most of the civil cases between Natives begin in these courts. They do, however, also hear appeals from the chief's court where there is one in the district. Appeals can be in turn made from their decisions to the Native Appeal Courts. There are two of these, one for the Transvaal and Natal, the other for the Cape Province and the Orange Free State. The bench in the appeal court consists of three experienced Native Commissioners, one of whom is the permanent President of the Court.

The most important fact about this series of courts is that they can decide cases *either* according to European law *or* according to Native law and custom, whichever it seems more appropriate to apply.<sup>1</sup> A *lobolo* case would, of course, be settled according to the Native law on the point at issue; whereas a dispute about goods bought and sold would be decided in accordance with European law.

The intention that lay behind the establishment of this system was sound enough, but certain difficulties have arisen in practice.

<sup>1</sup> There is a proviso that such customs must 'not be repugnant to public policy or natural justice'.

The procedure and practice of the Native courts were designed to be simpler than that in the magistrate's courts in the hope that Bantu litigants would conduct their own cases and so also reduce the cost of litigation to themselves. This hope has not been fulfilled because the Bantu prefer to employ attorneys even though they can seldom really afford to spend as much as they do on contesting a case.

One reason why they go to attorneys is that the present generation of Bantu are far from familiar with Native law in its precise legal forms. Moreover, the circumstances of most cases to-day are fairly complicated and it is often necessary to employ an attorney to unravel them for proper presentation to the court.

Attorneys rely for their knowledge of Native law on the law reports of previous cases and on a few authoritative books that specialists in the subjects have written. The whole field of Native law is, however, not covered in this way, there is still a good deal of Native law and custom that has never been recorded and that consequently remains obscure. Native law should be reduced to writing and published for the information of all affected by it. In Natal a code of Native law was drawn up in 1891 and revised in 1932. As a result Zulu law is clearer and better known than any other branch of Native law.

The Native Administration Act also introduced certain uniform rules of law relating to marriage and inheritance for all Natives in the Union. These are too complicated to summarize here<sup>1</sup> It must suffice to say that the recognition of Native law set up a conflict between European and Native law in many cases and that the legal problems involved are not easy to settle.

<sup>1</sup> On this subject see *An Outline of Native Law* by Julius Lewin, published by R. L. Esson & Co., Johannesburg.



## CHAPTER 6

## RELIGION AND EDUCATION

IN 1560 Father Gonzalo da Silveira landed at Sofala as the first Christian missionary to southern Africa. Almost 200 years later, in 1737, Georg Schmidt landed at Cape Town to establish a mission station on behalf of the Moravian Mission Society. But it was not until the nineteenth century that mission societies began to play a really important part in the march of European civilization in Africa. Since then the influence of the missionaries has been uninterrupted and immense. Beginning from the southern point of Africa, they pushed northwards, usually in advance of the rest of European civilization. They were the pioneers of that civilization. They opened up vast tracts of new country, they explored new rivers and lakes; they discovered tribes of whose existence no one had dreamt. They built mission stations that became centres of the Christian religion and of European culture. They reduced Bantu languages to writing, they were the pioneers in the education of the Bantu. To-day, the churches in Bantu locations, the mission stations dotted all over the country, the schools in locations and on mission stations, the social work done in towns, the mission hospitals, all bear witness to the work which was done, and is being done, in South Africa and in Southern Rhodesia, not to mention the rest of Africa, by mission societies of the various Christian churches. Millions of pounds have been spent in the past and hundreds of thousands are spent every year by these societies. Many noble lives have been sacrificed in the cause of the mission to the Bantu.

It is impossible to estimate with any degree of accuracy the effect on present-day Bantu life in southern Africa of this tremendous missionary effort. A mere statement of the number of Christian Bantu, the number of missionaries actually working to-day, or the annual expenditure on mission work, is no

real measure of the influence exerted by mission societies. Such facts serve only as a stimulus to the imagination.

The primary object of mission societies has always been to preach the Christian religion. The missionaries very soon came up against great difficulties in this field. The Christian religion and Western civilization are so interwoven that it is difficult to separate them. So, too, are the primitive Bantu religions and Bantu social ideas. In attacking Bantu heathenism with the instruments of religion and civilization, the missionaries also attacked Bantu social institutions and thus set up very serious conflicts in the minds of the Bantu. Converts to Christianity were called upon to give up customs which often meant that they had to renounce their tribal and family obligations. Among many Bantu tribes in southern Africa and elsewhere, for example, it is customary for a man to take over the wife and children of a brother who dies. This is a very sound institution according to Bantu social ideas, as it provides a means of caring for widows and orphans. According to Christian ideas, however, a man may not have more than one wife. Here, then, Christian ideals clash with Bantu family duties. There are many more examples of this conflict between two social systems, and it is here that the mission societies have been one of the greatest agencies in breaking up tribal life. To-day many missionaries are alive to the problems created by this conflict and deal with them sympathetically, often trying to adapt Christian ideas to Bantu institutions. But just as in the past the impact of a money economy on a subsistence economy had very serious effects on tribal institutions, so the impact of Christianity on Bantu society has had a disintegrating effect on tribal life. It is natural that in the process good as well as evil customs were weakened.

In the early days of missionary enterprise, mission societies frequently operated in territory which was not yet under European control. After annexation, friction often arose with the Government, whose chief concern was to exploit the conquered territory and to maintain law and order. These

objects were often achieved with harshness and injustice to the Bantu, and missionary policy clashed with Government policy on these points. The Government accused the missionaries of interfering with matters that did not concern them, and the missionaries felt that everything that affected the welfare of the Bantu was their concern. There was also competition and friction between the various mission societies. This resulted in overlapping and, consequently, wasted effort. Further, it was very confusing to the Bantu who were unable to understand the differences in religious doctrine. To-day the missionaries have learnt the value of co-operation through General Missionary Councils and through conferences, and governments have learnt the value of working through mission societies. Even now some people resent what they call interference in politics on the part of the missionaries, and the number of different societies still confuse the Bantu. But the position has greatly improved.

Missionaries soon found that, though their main object was to preach the Gospel, very many secondary objects resulted from this. There was the question of recurrent hunger with which a subsistence economy is always faced, and missionaries had to tackle that problem on their own stations and among the tribes in their area. They introduced better tools and improved methods of farming, they experimented with new crops; they built dams and irrigation furrows; they erected windmills. Then there were questions of building houses and churches and hospitals, of supplying the medical needs of the Bantu so as to counteract superstition, of constructing roads, of fencing, of making furniture. To do all these things, the missionaries had to train Bantu labour. To-day mission stations are very much more than places where Christianity is preached. They are places where skilled Bantu artisans are trained and work, where scientific agriculture is carried on, where scientific medicine is practised, and where all kinds of theoretical and practical subjects are taught. In the Reserves these mission stations are as different from the surrounding

primitive Bantu villages as a big industrial city is from a country village.

It is not only in the Reserves that missionaries influence Bantu life. In the towns and on the mines of southern Africa the various churches of mission societies are more than places of worship. They are social centres for all kinds of civilizing activities. There, as in the Reserves, the Bantu are brought into contact with some of the best aspects of European civilization and culture and, while the missionaries have not got to do so much engineering, agricultural, or carpentering work as in the Reserves, they are often the main force behind social welfare work and behind the kind of work that is helping the urban Bantu to adapt himself to European standards of life.

Apart from the teaching of religion, the most important aspect of mission work is education. In the wider sense of the term, all that has been mentioned above is educational, and the effect of training the Bantu in habits of skilled industry and accustoming them to European standards of life is very great. But education is here taken in its narrower sense of school education. From the earliest days of missionary effort in southern Africa, missionaries have been aware of the immense importance of schools. The early governments were not interested in the education of the Bantu and were, in any case, not prepared to spend money on it. Thus it came about that the mission societies were the first founders of schools, just as, in Europe, the first schools were established and controlled by the churches. When the various governments did begin to take an interest, they contented themselves for the most part with giving small subsidies to the mission societies that were already doing the work. That is still so to-day with the overwhelming majority of Bantu schools in southern Africa; but, of recent years, governments have become more alive to their responsibilities in this matter and are not only paying larger subsidies, but are taking a much more active part in directing policy and in controlling administration.

In the early days the kind of education given on mission

stations depended entirely on the missionary and on his knowledge and abilities as teacher. He used his own syllabus and his own methods, often with rather startling results. As soon as the Government began to give financial aid, it began to take a hand in policy and thus there has grown up a system by which a Government department is in charge of Bantu education and, with the advice of missionaries, prescribes the curriculum and supervises the work. In each of the provinces of the Union the responsibility for education rests with the Provincial Council. The Director of Education is the principal administrative officer, and he is assisted by a Chief Inspector of Native Schools. A special branch of the Education Department deals with Bantu schools. In each province there is an Advisory Board for Native Education on which the chief mission societies engaged in educational work are represented. In the Cape Province the inspectors of schools inspect all schools, Bantu as well as European, but in the other provinces there are special staffs of European inspectors who devote all their attention to Bantu schools. In addition to these, each Department employs a staff of trained Bantu to assist the inspectors. In 1936 a very important Inter-Departmental Committee on Native Education recommended that in future all education should come under the Minister for Education of the Union Government and that there should be a National Board to advise him, with Provincial Boards for local administration. There would also be a Union Director of Native Education.

Each individual school is controlled, under the Education Department, by a manager, who is usually a missionary. In a number of amalgamated schools, that is, schools formed by co-operation of different mission societies, the management is in the hands of an executive of the school committee, which represents both the mission societies and the parents. The work of the managers is to recommend teachers for appointment or dismissal, to be responsible for the religious and moral instruction of the children, and to exercise a general supervision over the schools under their management.

There are about 8,000 Bantu teachers in the Union and of these 7,500 teach in primary schools. About 70 per cent of the primary school teachers are qualified, which means that they have passed Standard VII or the Junior Certificate Examination and have taken a two or three years' teachers' course after that. In the secondary schools only a certain number are fully qualified. The salary scales vary in the four provinces. They range from roughly £5 to £8 per month. The average pay is probably about £6, which is the wage that a good many unskilled labourers are now getting. In spite of some slight improvement in recent years, the very low salaries paid to teachers are not only a standing grievance, but they are making it increasingly hard to keep able men in the teaching profession.

There are four kinds of school : primary, secondary, teacher-training, and industrial. According to a Government report for 1935-6, there were then 3,254 primary schools with about 332,000 children ; there were 20 secondary schools with 2,273 pupils, 36 industrial schools with 1,164 pupils ; and 26 teacher-training schools with 3,540 pupils. Education is not compulsory for the Bantu and it should be noted that the total number at school is to-day about 25 per cent of the number of Bantu children of school-going age. Even if the extra 75 per cent wanted to go to school, there would not be accommodation for them. Of the children in primary schools, about 75 per cent are in Standard II and below, only about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent are in Standard VI. The number of secondary schools has increased in recent years, especially in the Transvaal.

In the primary schools, the course lasts eight years—two sub-standards and six standards ; a large percentage does not complete this course. The curriculum consists of the usual school subjects and religious instruction, a Bantu language, one of the official languages of the Union (in the Free State both are required), manual training, such as handicrafts, needlework, and gardening, Nature study, hygiene, music, drill, and games. This curriculum can be carried out in the larger

schools only, since in a great number of the single-teacher schools the lack of equipment and of training make it impossible for the teacher to do all this. It must be remembered that the standard of education is not the same as for Europeans. It is probably correct to say that a Bantu child in Standard III is about two years older than a European child in the same standard and that the Bantu Standard III is about equivalent to the European Standard I. The secondary schools prepare pupils for the Junior Certificate and Matriculation examinations of South Africa, and the courses are the same as those followed in European schools. The industrial and teacher-training schools follow the European model.

A very important question in Bantu education is whether the courses should be the same as for European children. Some people argue that under the economic and social system of South Africa the needs, in later life, of the Bantu are different from the European, and that the curriculum should therefore be different. Naturally, all are agreed that what are called 'the three R's' should be taught. Those who advocate a different curriculum want to lay much greater stress on handwork for boys and domestic service training for girls. The opponents of this view say that, ultimately the aims of education are the same for all people and that it is a dangerous principle to differentiate. In actual practice the systems are different in the primary schools, because European and Bantu children are brought up in such different environments that exactly the same courses cannot be applied. In the secondary school, however, the courses are the same, since both write the same examinations. On the question of medium of instruction most people are now agreed that this should be a Bantu language until about Standard IV, and the old days when Bantu children recited meaningless English sentences are now past. The Bantu themselves are much opposed to having their education system different from that of the Europeans. They are afraid they will be given an inferior course and, also, they naturally connect European education with better economic conditions.

Education for the Bantu is free in the primary stage. For Europeans, both primary and secondary education is free throughout the Union. The mission societies must provide their own buildings. Often these are churches or disused churches and not at all suitable for school use. In Natal, the Transvaal, and the Orange Free State all furniture and school equipment must be provided from mission funds and school fees; in the Cape Province these things are provided by the Education Department. Pupils and teachers must provide their own books, except in the Cape Province, where the Department pays half the cost of books for the pupils and provides books for the teachers. The Inter-Departmental Committee on Native Education has recommended that the Government provide all school equipment and advance money for school buildings, and that half the cost of school books be paid by the Government.

Although the Provincial Administrations control Bantu education, it is from the Union Government that the funds come. Actually the money comes from the Native Trust Fund and is paid in a block grant to the different Education Departments. We saw in a previous chapter that the amount paid by the Government into the Trust Account was based on the expenditure on Bantu education in 1922. The result is that Bantu education has to manage on very little money and expansion is almost impossible. The average amount available for Bantu pupils is just over £2 per pupil per year; for Europeans it is about £18 per year. With such meagre funds, it is to be expected that school buildings and equipment will be poor and salary scales low. There are practically no library facilities and very few of the aids to education with which a modern school is now equipped—aids such as good maps, classroom mathematical instruments, science apparatus, and reference books. In spite of all these difficulties, the educational progress in the last twenty years has been remarkable.

In 1880 Dr Stewart, the head of Lovedale Institute, spoke about the ultimate need for a place where the Bantu could



enjoy a university education. In 1916 this object was achieved when General Botha, then Prime Minister of the Union, opened the South African Native College at Fort Hare, near to Lovedale in the Eastern Province. This college is a constituent college of the University of South Africa and it accepts Indian and coloured students as well as Bantu. The courses are the same as for the University of South Africa and the students write exactly the same examinations. There are now about 170 students, and though, like all university institutions, the College lacks funds for development, it is well-equipped both on the arts and on the science side and is staffed by a group of qualified men and women, both European and Bantu. A growing number of students obtain degrees of the University of South Africa, and in 1937 the University conferred an honorary doctor's degree on the Rev. John Dube of Natal, the first Bantu to be honoured in this way.

Before Fort Hare was established, a small number of Bantu went to England and America to take university courses. *Fort Hare is not equipped as a medical school, but a growing number of Bantu students are taking the full medical course at the Witwatersrand University.*

In estimating some of the results of education on the Bantu people, we must bear the facts clearly in mind. In England education for the mass of the population began in 1870 and yet there is not to-day room in English secondary schools for all those who want to go. For the Bantu education for the mass has not yet begun, since only 20 per cent of the children of a school-going age are at school. Further, when education in England did begin it started with a written language and an organized printing press. The Bantu had, until comparatively recent years, no written language and only very small mission printing presses. The vast mass of the population is thus still illiterate. The achievements of education must, therefore, be measured against this background. To-day there are two important printing presses—at Lovedale and at Morija in Basutoland—and a number of smaller ones. Every year these

presses publish and sell tens of thousands of books, mostly in Bantu languages, besides many pamphlets and magazines. There are about fifteen Bantu newspapers in South Africa. One of them, the *Imvo Zabantsundu* ('Bantu Opinion') was established as long ago as 1884; others, such as the *Bantu World*, *Umteteli wa Bantu*, and *Ilanga lase Natal*, are more recent. These papers usually contain articles in more than one Bantu language and also in English, and the editors and staffs are Bantu. In recent years a company known as the Bantu Press was founded at Johannesburg, with European capital and control, and it has combined several newspapers, with remarkable results in circulation. An increasing number of Bantu subscribe to European newspapers, because these have a better news service. With an increase in popular education for the Bantu, South African newspapers would be able to double and treble their circulation in a very short time.

A number of Bantu have written books, either in English or in one or other of the Bantu languages, and the number of those who submit manuscripts for publication is increasing every year. Among the best-known books in English are *The Black Problem*, and several others, by Professor D. D. T. Jabavu, who is a graduate of London University and on the staff of Fort Hare; *The Bantu*, by Dr. Molema; *Chaka*, by T. Mofolo; and a novel called *Mhudi*, by S. T. Plaatje. Numerous translations from other languages, particularly English, have also been done by Bantu and by European writers. Tiyo Soga translated *The Pilgrim's Progress* into Xosa, and Plaatje translated Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors* into Tswana.

One of the difficulties about stimulating a love of reading among the Bantu is the lack of library facilities. Very few Bantu schools have library books and, in the towns, the Bantu are not allowed to use the European public libraries. Recently, in Johannesburg, Durban and Bloemfontein, a beginning has been made, under a scheme made possible by the Carnegie Corporation, of sending out boxes of books to

various centres such as schools and Bantu clubs, and Johannesburg and a few other centres have now special small libraries for the Bantu. Lack of funds makes the effort seem very small when compared with the need. The books in these libraries are mostly in English, though as many as exist in Bantu languages are bought. Bantu children read and like the kind of books that European children do. The older people do not at present care much for novels, because they think them a waste of time ; they want instructive books and are very fond of history and biography.

Bantu men who are educated become ministers of religion, teachers, or Government servants, journalists, doctors, or lawyers. There are three or four lawyers, but the difficulties in the way of qualifying and of practising are so great that it is unlikely that many Bantu will enter this profession. There are a few Bantu medical doctors who mainly practise among their own people in the Reserves.

Bantu ministers are trained by one or other of the mission societies and have very responsible positions. They are looked up to by their own people, and sometimes the feeling of being in authority is a temptation to them to try to get even more power. That is one of the reasons why there are, among the Bantu, so many separatist churches. If the European mission exercises too much control over the Bantu minister or evangelist, he is apt to resent this and found a church on his own. Another reason for separatist churches is that some Bantu, gifted, but not in a religious way, notices the power that a minister has and establishes a church on his own in order to get that power and to provide a more comfortable living for himself. A third reason is, of course, that the European churches themselves are divided, and the Bantu cannot always understand why they should not do likewise. National feeling sometimes urges them to found purely Bantu churches free from European control. In South Africa there are about 200 separatist churches registered by the Government and there are many more unregistered. Some of these, such as the African

Methodist Episcopal Church, have a large following ; others, such as the 'Heaven Apostolic Jerusalem Church in Zion', are of local significance only.

A large number of Bantu who have a certain amount of education but are not trained professionally find employment in municipal and Government departments as clerks, interpreters, sanitary inspectors, and court officials. Others, after a course of training, become agricultural demonstrators in the Reserves. In practice, the number of professions or occupations open to educated or trained Bantu is limited by the expense of training and by colour prejudice or legislation after they have been trained. Most educated Bantu finish their training at a later age than do the Europeans. They go to school late and often have to break their course in order to earn sufficient money to complete it later. For Bantu women, the only two professions that are, in practice, open are nursing, teaching, and social welfare work.

A sign of the development of the Bantu is to be found in the growth of Bantu organizations, apart from the separatist churches. Such organizations as the Cape Native Voters' Association, the African National Congress, trade unions, and the various teachers' associations are examples of association of Bantu on a national or provincial rather than on a tribal basis. The leaders of these movements are usually the educated Bantu. As often happens with movements of this kind, however, among Europeans as well as among Bantu, semi-educated men try to use them for their own private gain. The organizations are not very strong, because the Bantu are not yet accustomed to this form of society and it is mostly among the urban Bantu that the members are to be found.

Churches and schools, libraries and newspapers, do not provide the only education that the Bantu receive. Those who work on farms and in towns are constantly learning by contact with Europeans. When Europeans are rude or polite to them, treat them justly or unjustly, the Bantu are learning all the time. It is the hard school of experience. But apart from this

school and from the more formal methods of education, there are, in a number of towns, societies under European control that aim at the social education and welfare of the urban Bantu. The Wayfarers' Association is run on the same lines as the Girl Guides, and a part of it has recently been taken over by the Guides as part of their activities. For boys the Pathfinders' Association is a branch of, and works in close collaboration with, the Boy Scouts and does a similar kind of work. There are now thousands of Pathfinders and Wayfarers in the Union, in the Protectorates, and in Southern and Northern Rhodesia. Then there are Non-European Child Welfare Associations and clubs for men and women. There are about forty Joint European and Bantu Councils and Native Welfare Associations. These unofficial Joint Councils usually consist of an equal number of Bantu and European members and they meet about once a month to discuss such matters as Bantu welfare, proposed legislation, methods of administration, and, generally, methods by which the relations between the two races may be improved. These societies all provide an opportunity for educated Bantu and educated Europeans to meet and learn to understand each other's difficulties and points of view.

The South African Institute of Race Relations has its headquarters at Johannesburg. The chief aims of the Institute are to promote research into the conditions of the various races of South Africa and to stimulate a healthy and informed public interest in questions affecting the contact between these races. Various universities, too, now have Departments of Bantu Studies for the purpose of encouraging research and of giving their students a knowledge of Bantu affairs. In some university centres there are Bantu study circles formed by the students with the object of stimulating an interest in race relations. Such student societies sometimes have debates against Bantu debating societies or get some prominent Bantu leader to address them. All these organizations are important factors in the education of both Bantu and European

## CHAPTER 7

THE PROTECTORATES AND SOUTH-WEST  
AFRICA

BORDERING on the Union and, in one case, completely surrounded by Union territory, lie three British territories known as Protectorates. Also bordering on the Union and conquered by the South African forces during the first world war lies South-West Africa, the former German colony, now administered by the Union Government under mandate from the League of Nations. These four territories are predominantly Bantu, and their economic dependence on the Union is such that a description of the Bantu of southern Africa must include one of the territories and of their relation to the Union.

*(a) Basutoland*

In the early years of the nineteenth century, Moselikatze, the famous Matabele chief, raided and plundered far and wide and, in the course of his wars, broke up and dispersed many Bantu tribes. By about 1820 a number of these remnants of former tribes were united by a Bantu chief of outstanding ability, Moshesh, who established his new nation in what is to-day called Basutoland. For more than fifty years he ruled the growing Basuto nation wisely, and many stories are told of his abilities as a leader, of his clever diplomacy, and of his deep insight into human nature. He steered his country safely through the very difficult years when European civilization was pushing northwards, and he must be ranked among the great statesmen of South Africa.

Between 1852 and 1868 there was fairly constant trouble and war between Basutoland and the two European states, the Cape Colony and the Free State Republic. These disputes and wars were about boundaries—that is, about the ownership

of land ; and the absence of accurate maps, combined with the constant land hunger on both sides, made it difficult to come to an arrangement that would suit every one. Further, on the border between Basutoland and the Free State there was constant traffic and frequent cattle raids. In 1865 the last Basuto-Free State war began and when, three years later, Moshesh was on the point of defeat at the hands of the Free State burghers, he appealed to Great Britain for protection. On 12 March 1868, Moshesh and his Basutos were proclaimed British subjects and this day, known as Moshesh's Day, is now celebrated as a public holiday by the Basutos.

The British Government had not been very anxious to accept responsibility for Basutoland, and as soon as it could it persuaded the Cape Government to take it over. This was in 1871, and about ten years later there was a rebellion in Basutoland because the Cape Government tried to disarm the tribesmen. After that, in 1884, the British Government once more took charge and the country has been administered as a Crown Colony by Great Britain ever since then.

Basutoland is a country of 11,716 square miles—about as big as Belgium—and its present population is about 600,000. A large portion of the country is mountainous and not suitable for cultivation, but towards the west the hills and plains are very fertile and have an average rainfall of 30 inches a year. Maseru, the capital, is connected by railway with Bloemfontein, but only about one mile of the railway is in Basutoland itself, and that is controlled by the Union Government. For the rest, the country has no railways and very few good roads.

The British High Commissioner for South Africa is Governor of Basutoland and has powers to legislate by proclamation. At Maseru the Resident Commissioner represents the Governor, and for practical purposes is the Governor. The country is divided into seven districts, at the head of each of which is an District Commissioner. Each district is divided into wards and over each of these there is one of the so-called 'Sons of Moshesh'—that is, chiefs of the Moshesh family. The Para-

mount Chief and all the sub-chiefs have very great powers under the British Government, which has never liked to interfere more than it can help in the affairs of Basutoland, and the Basutos themselves, especially the chiefs, resent interference. It must be remembered that the Basutos are not a conquered nation. The chiefs can demand free labour from their subjects, they and the village headmen control the allocation of grazing land and land for cultivation, and they try most civil and many petty criminal cases, though the inhabitants have the right of appeal to the courts of the District Commissioner. The chiefs also have great power in the Basutoland Council. This consists of a hundred members, of whom ninety-five are chiefs or nominees of chiefs and five are nominated by the Administration. The Council meets once a year and is consultative only. Although the Administration is not bound *to follow the advice of the Council, it will seldom pass measures to which the Council is opposed*. This often means that necessary reforms in administration or in agriculture are held up by objections from the chiefs, who are conservative and afraid of losing their power. The powers of the chiefs act as a brake on progress, and the younger commoners, especially the more educated among them, are naturally dissatisfied with this state of affairs.

The type of settlement in Basutoland is the agricultural village with huts close together and the fields within easy reach of the village. The land is not enclosed and each man has a few strips which he and his family cultivate, but which belong to the tribe. He owns his own cattle and sheep and the produce of the land is his own private property. Grazing land is common. The village headman has to keep order, settle minor disputes, assist in the allocation of land and in gathering taxes. Europeans may not own land in Basutoland, and altogether there are about 2,000 European officials, traders, and missionaries.

The courts of the District Commissioners and the chiefs' courts administer justice in the districts. Unless altered by



proclamation, Basuto tribal law is applied in both civil and criminal cases; mostly it is Basuto civil law and, for serious crimes, European criminal law. A number of Basuto laws have been codified in what are known as 'the Laws of Lerothodi' Lerothodi was a former Paramount Chief and these laws deal mostly with the powers and rights of the chiefs and the duties of their subjects. Where a European is concerned, the chief has no jurisdiction unless the European has consented to be tried by him.

The annual revenue of the country is over £400,000, of which the Hut Tax is nearly half. The Hut Tax is £1 5s. per year for every hut. This really means for every wife occupying a separate hut. No one, however, pays more than £3 15s. In addition to this, there is an education tax of 3s. which is collected with the Hut Tax, but is credited to a separate Development Fund. Chiefs and headmen must assist in tax collection, and for this and other work they receive a small annual allowance. Taxes of men working on the mines are collected there by an official of the Basutoland Government. The annual expenditure roughly balances the revenue, and the three biggest items are for education, agriculture, and police. About £70,000 is spent each year on education.

Basutoland exports agricultural produce and wool, and imports manufactured articles of all sorts, blankets, household utensils, groceries, and clothing. The value of the imports is always greater than that of the exports and the difference is paid for, as with all Bantu areas, by the wages of men and women who go to work outside of Basutoland. About 50,000 men go to the mines every year and a number to European farms and to work in towns in the Union. There is thus a high percentage of adult males who are away from home at any one time. All imports into Basutoland come in through the harbours of the Union, and a percentage of the Customs duties paid there is handed over to the Basutoland Government.

There are three important mission societies operating in Basutoland. The oldest is the Paris Evangelical Missionary

Society at Morija, which was established more than a century ago and has done wonderful work for the education of Basutoland and, through the Morija Press, for the rest of Southern Africa. The Roman Catholic and the English Church missions were established much later, but the former have expanded rapidly in recent years. Education is largely in the hands of the mission societies. There are about 531 elementary schools, which are all Government-aided mission schools, fifty-eight intermediate schools, of which five are Government and the rest Government-aided, and ten Government-aided institutions for the training of teachers and for industrial and agricultural instruction. The Government has one technical school, the Lerothodi Technical School at Maseru. Finally, there are a small number of mission schools that do not receive Government aid. Altogether there are about 83,000 pupils at the various schools. In addition to their educational work, the missions organize sports clubs and Wayfarer and Pathfinder detachments and do a great deal for the general welfare of the Basutos.

There are eight Government hospitals at which out-patients pay a small fee for medical attention, while in-patients do not pay. The hospitals are staffed with European doctors and with European and Bantu nurses. In every district there is a Medical Officer of the Administration.

The post and telegraph system of Basutoland is controlled by the Union; so, too, are the currency and the Customs duties. A South African bank operates at Maseru.

In many ways Basutoland is different from the other Protectorates. It has a compact territory and a unified population; it has a good climate for agriculture and stock-farming; the people are proud and independent; Europeans may not own land there. On the other hand, overstocking and soil erosion are rife and good country is being wasted; the absence of fencing, to which the chiefs object, and the autocratic powers of the chiefs prevent progressive farmers from getting the best results; the large number of adult males that leave the

country to earn cash wages leaves the women and children to cultivate the fields and look after the cattle ; young and educated Basutos have no real scope in the administration, because the chiefs are uneducated and conservative.

Village life in Basutoland is much the same as in the Reserves and there is no need to give another description here. The influence of European civilization is perhaps more marked here than in the other two Protectorates. Bantu dress and domestic industries are disappearing and their place taken by manufactured articles from the traders' stores. But Bantu customs and institutions are still alive and magic still plays an important part in the lives of the people. The family and the village are the foundations of Bantu society and these have not been disturbed as much as in the Union of South Africa.

*(b) Bechuanaland*

Since 1896 the Bechuanaland Protectorate has been administered by Great Britain through the High Commissioner. For some years before that time Cecil Rhodes and his friends, on the one hand, and the Transvaal Republic, on the other, had cast longing eyes on the country over which the famous chief Khama and other chiefs ruled. To Rhodes it was the neck of the bottle in his schemes for British expansions to the north. In 1885, the Bechuana chiefs, under pressure from British subjects and in fear of the Transvaal, applied to Great Britain for protection. This was granted and, ten years later, Rhodes tried to get the territory transferred to the British South Africa Company. He failed in this because the Jameson Raid had turned British public opinion against the Company, but he got a concession to build a railway to connect the Cape with Rhodesia.

The area of the Bechuanaland Protectorate is about twenty-four times that of Basutoland and its population is about 160,000. Large parts of this enormous country are desert or semi-desert, and in the grasslands the climate is more suited

to stock-farming than to agriculture. The railway line from the Cape Province runs practically due north through the territory and the main motor road runs parallel to that. Apart from this, roads are bad, though better inter-town roads are now being constructed to take motor-lorry traffic. A number of European farmers live in one corner of the Protectorate and there is mining in the Tati District ; but the total European population is only about 2,000 and most of the country is divided into Reserves for the different tribes.

The Government is, with certain differences, much like that of Basutoland. The head-quarters of the Administration are in Mafeking, in the northern Cape Province. There is a Resident Commissioner for the territory and magistrates in charge of each of the eleven districts into which the country is divided for administrative purposes. The chiefs have great powers in the tribal Reserves. They allocate land for ploughing and grazing ; they have the right to impose taxes for tribal purposes ; they try cases according to tribal law, they are responsible for law and order and must assist in collecting the taxes. It should be remembered that, under British protection, the powers of the chiefs in all the Protectorates have greatly increased. In the pre-European days the chiefs were effectively controlled by their councils and by the public opinion of the tribe. European government tended to support the chief at the expense of the council and these checks on arbitrary power have largely disappeared. Of recent years, however, the Bechuanaland Government's policy has been to re-establish the old councils and to make the chiefs more responsible to their tribes.

An important step taken in 1939 was the establishment of Native treasuries in the Reserves. Each treasury is operated by the chief and a finance committee under the guidance of the District Commissioner. The Government pays 35 per cent of the total collections of Native tax to the local treasury, which prepares estimates of revenue and expenditure and generally controls its own finances. The chiefs now receive

a regular salary instead of a percentage of the tax they collect, as they did formerly.

There is a Native Advisory Council consisting of the chiefs and five representatives from each of the big tribes. This body meets the Resident Commissioner twice a year to discuss matters of interest to the Bantu inhabitants and to decide on the allocation of money for Bantu welfare. There is also a European Advisory Council consisting of twelve elected members. This meets twice a year and discusses only such matters as affect European interests. Neither of these bodies has any but advisory powers.

The annual revenue of the Protectorate is about £180,000, of which direct taxation brings in about 20 per cent. The direct tax on the population is £1 for every adult male. If a man has more than one wife, he pays additional taxation, but the maximum is £3. The biggest items of expenditure are for police, veterinary service, and administration.

The Protectorate exports cattle, hides and skins, wool, dairy products, and curios, and it imports manufactured articles. The imports are greater than the exports and the difference is accounted for by the large numbers who go into the Union to work on the mines and on farms. Customs duties are controlled at the Union ports and a percentage paid over to the Protectorate Government. The postal system is controlled by the Union Government, and the telegraph and telephone system by the Government of Southern Rhodesia, except for one small section, which falls under the Union. The currency of the Union is used in the Protectorates.

The London Missionary Society was established about a hundred years ago and is the oldest mission society in the Protectorate. Among the most important other societies are the Dutch Reformed Church Mission and the Lutheran Mission. There are about 130 schools for the Bantu, with about 15,000 pupils, and £16,000 is spent yearly on education. This represents about 8 per cent of the total expenditure of the territory. The Bamangwato tribe have a very fine school,

called the Khama Memorial School, which they built themselves and largely support. The education system is much the same as elsewhere, though there are peculiar difficulties in Bechuanaland, owing to the fact that the parents send the children to distant cattle posts, or move with their families to the lands, during the school year. It is difficult to make progress with such irregular attendance.

There are three Government hospitals and five mission hospitals which receive Government aid. The health of the Bantu inhabitants is not good, and this is probably due to malaria and to wrong diet, especially among children. Game, which used to provide a regular meat diet, has decreased steadily, and the lack of water makes vegetable-growing a difficult matter. The distance of the cattle posts from the *stad* often means that there is no milk for the children during eight months of the year. The Bechuana live in large *stads*, sometimes with populations of from 10,000 to 20,000 and the absence of proper sanitary arrangements has a bad effect on the health of the inhabitants.

The tribesmen of Bechuanaland are essentially peasants depending for their food on cattle and grain. For them the climate is very important and the recurrent droughts often reduce them to hunger. There are many boreholes to tap the underground water, but these are not nearly enough to take the place of rain. To pay their taxes and to buy European goods, they depend on being able to sell some of their produce or their labour. Their farming is primitive and their cattle are scrub cattle, and the Union Government, in order to protect the interests of its own farmers, has limited the import of cattle under a certain weight.

Tribal organization is still strong and tribal customs have survived in most parts of the territory, particularly away from the railway strip. The custom of forming regiments of young men of the same age still exists, but, instead of fighting, they do necessary tribal work, such as constructing a road or building a dam. Many of the young men resent this imposed work

which the chiefs have power to demand. European civilization has greatly modified the Bantu customs in family and in tribal life. Native industries are dead or dying. But many of the primitive religious and social ceremonies still survive and frequently they exist alongside of Christianity.

(c) *Swaziland*

Swaziland was taken under the protection of the South African Republic in 1894, but after the Anglo-Boer War it passed to British control and in 1907 was placed under the British High Commissioner for South Africa

Swaziland is half the size of Basutoland and has a population of 156,000, of whom about 2,700 are Europeans. In the high and middle veld the climate is good for agriculture and stock-farming and is very well watered. In the low veld the climate is very hot and malaria is prevalent. There are no railways in the territory, but the Union Government runs a road-motor service along the main routes.

The head-quarters of the administration are at Mbabane and the administration is much the same as in Bechuanaland. There are a Resident Commissioner, three Assistant Commissioners, and several Deputy Assistant Commissioners. There is a European Advisory Council of nine members, elected by the Europeans, but there is no Native Advisory Council. Europeans are allowed to own land under certain conditions. As in the other Protectorates, the court of the Resident Commissioner is the supreme court for the country and the Assistant Commissioners preside over the lower courts. The Paramount Chief and other tribal chiefs administer tribal law in cases where Bantu only are concerned. The chiefs have similar powers to those exercised in the other two Protectorates.

The annual revenue is about £190,000, of which about 30 per cent comes from a tax of £1 15s. on each Bantu male adult who is unmarried or has one wife. Men with more than one wife pay £1 10s. in respect of each wife, but not more than

£4 10s. altogether. About 6 per cent of this tax is placed in the Swazi National Fund, to be used for the welfare of the Swazis. There is very little export from Swaziland. A small amount of tin, timber, and cattle is exported and the usual manufactured articles are imported. The Swazis themselves have little to sell except their labour, and there are usually about 7,000 of them on the Witwatersrand mines, beside those who work for Europeans in Swaziland. Customs duties, posts and telegraphs service, and currency are controlled by the Union Government and two South African banks have branches in Swaziland.

There are twenty-three mission societies in Swaziland and Bantu education is in their hands, while the Government gives financial aid and exercises a certain amount of control. There are about 9,000 pupils in mission schools, and every year some of the more advanced are sent to Union institutions, such as Tiger Kloof and Lovedale, for further training. Their expenses are paid from the Swazi National Fund. There are Government and mission doctors.

What was said of Basutoland and Bechuanaland about the power of the chiefs, tribal institutions, village life, and the influence of European civilization is true of Swaziland and need not be repeated here.

#### *(d) The Protectorates and the Union*

When the union of the four South African colonies was established, it was obvious to the British and South African statesmen of the time that it might be desirable at some time in the future to hand over the three Protectorates to the Union Administration. In a Schedule to the South Africa Act of 1909, therefore, provision was made for this. According to the Schedule, the Governor-General-in-Council shall, after transfer of any territory to the Union, have powers to make laws for that territory by proclamation, subject to the approval of the Union Parliament. The territories will come under the



Prime Minister's department and a Commission of at least three people must be appointed to advise the Government. Separate revenue and expenditure accounts must be kept for each territory, and money raised there must be spent there, except that a small amount may be used for general defence purposes. Land in Basutoland, and Reserves in Bechuanaland and Swaziland, may not be alienated. The King may disallow any law made by the Governor-General-in-Council within one year of its proclamation. Finally, any bill to amend the Schedule of the South Africa Act must be approved by the King. It will be seen from these provisions that the British Government wanted to make sure that, if the Protectorates were transferred, it would still have a control over legislation.

Since 1909 important constitutional changes have taken place, and South Africa is now an equal partner with Great Britain in the British Commonwealth of Nations. In practice this means that, where in 1909 the King-in-Council meant the King and his British Ministers, to-day it means the King and his South African Government. Once the Protectorates were transferred to the Union, therefore, the British Government would have no more control over them and any safeguards that were inserted in the Act of Union could be amended by the South African Parliament. This new position has caused the British Government to hesitate before handing over the Protectorates.

Although South African statesmen have asked that the transfer should take place, many people in Great Britain and in South Africa are opposed to this on the grounds that Great Britain is the trustee of the Bantu tribes in the Protectorates and cannot hand them over to another government without their consent and without being sure they will benefit from the change. They point out, further, that the tribes, if they are governed by the Union, will become subject to pass laws and to colour bar legislation. Those in favour of the transfer maintain, on the other hand, that the Bantu will benefit economically by passing under Union control because, in any case,

the economic life of the Protectorates is completely dependent on the Union. The South African Government controls their customs policy, their currency, and, with a few exceptions, their transport and communications. The Union is a market for their labour and for a good deal of their produce. From the South African point of view, it is maintained that the Union cannot evolve a comprehensive policy with regard to the Bantu unless the Protectorates are under her direct control. Also, the Protectorates now enjoy privileges from association with the Union without bearing any of the responsibilities. The Bantu tribes themselves are, with small exceptions, said to be opposed to Union control, because they fear that their land may be taken from them and that they will be subject to restrictive legislation. It would not be an easy matter, however, to find out what the Bantu inhabitants of the Protectorates want, because there is no adequate means of determining public opinion in the Protectorates. Before anything final is done, a number of matters will have to be carefully considered. It will have to be discovered what the economic results will be, not only for the Protectorates, but for the Union. At the moment the Protectorates do not pay their own way and the British Government has to make up the deficits. It will also have to be more clearly known what the policy is which the Union Government intends applying to the Protectorates once it takes them over.

The matter is far from settled and, though it is very probable that in the end the Protectorates will be administered by the Union Government, the transfer would take place on certain conditions.

#### (e) *South-West Africa*

In 1884, during the scramble for Africa, Germany proclaimed a protectorate over South-West Africa, having made treaties with the Herero chiefs and with the Nama Hottentots. The Hereros and the Nama were hereditary enemies and had

fought each other almost continuously until Germany took the country over and placed its capital, Windhoek, between the two tribes. Missionaries had been in the country since 1844, and later there had been a few traders, but with the German occupation colonization began in earnest. More mission stations were established, traders and Government officials came, and colonist farmers began to settle. In 1904 a rebellion broke out in which the principal Bantu tribes tried to overthrow the German Government. The Hereros were particularly active in the rebellion and it was not finally crushed until 1907. The Herero tribal organization was practically destroyed and they became, instead of cattle-owners, agricultural labourers for the Europeans. Other tribes, both Bantu and Hottentot, were conquered, but they were left very much to themselves, since the German colonists did not require their labour or their land. The Government built two good main roads and 1,400 miles of railway and established harbours at Luderitz and Swakopmund.

At the outbreak of the first world war the South African forces invaded South-West Africa and by 1915 had conquered it. At the conclusion of the War, the country was entrusted to the Union under what is known as a C. Mandate—that is, the Union Government is responsible to the League of Nations for its administration of South-West Africa and must render an annual account to the League. Provided that this responsibility is acknowledged and observed, a C. Mandate territory may be administered as an integral part of the Mandatory Power. The Union Government may, therefore, apply any Union laws to South-West Africa.

When the War was over, the Union Government appointed an Administrator to rule the country, and he had the advice of an Advisory Council of six, nominated by himself; one of these had to be some one specially qualified to give advice about the non-European population. This system remained in force until 1926, when a new constitution was made. Under this there is a Legislative Assembly of eighteen, of whom

twelve are elected by the Europeans and six are appointed by the Administrator: the Executive Committee consists of the Administrator and four members elected by the Assembly. The Assembly may make ordinances on all matters except those specially reserved—such as Native affairs, mines and minerals, customs, railways, police, and military affairs. On these matters the Administrator legislates by proclamation. He is assisted by an Advisory Council consisting of the Executive Committee of the Assembly and three people appointed by him, one of whom must have special knowledge of non-European affairs. All ordinances and proclamations are subject to the approval of the Governor-General of the Union.

The Administrator is the Supreme Chief of all the Bantu tribes and the Government Secretary is the Chief Native Commissioner. Except at Windhoek, the magistrates are Native Commissioners, and under them are Superintendents of Native Reserves and Locations.

For the first few years after this constitution came into force things went smoothly; but first the depression of 1929 and then the political events in Germany began to cause ill-feeling and, later, open hostility between the older German inhabitants and the new colonists from the Union. In 1936 the Union Government had to take drastic steps against the Nazi Party and this, naturally enough, did not lessen the tension.

South-West Africa is a country of 317,725 square miles, or about two-thirds the area of the Union, and has a population of 32,000 Europeans and 230,000 non-Europeans. It stretches for 800 miles from the Orange River to the borders of Angola and from the Atlantic Ocean for 350 miles to the east. A good deal of this area is uninhabited desert. The European population is mostly confined to the central portion of the territory and even there farming is difficult without underground water supplies.

The country is divided administratively into two zones—the police zone and the area outside of it, which lies in the northern part of the territory and includes Ovamboland, the

Okavango, and the Caprivi Zipfel. In Ovamboland and the Okavango more than half the non-European population lives, although they occupy only  $5\frac{1}{2}$  per cent of the area of South-West Africa.

The non-European population consists of various Hottentot tribes, some Bushmen, a few Bastard tribes, and Bantu tribes. Most of the Bantu live outside of the Police Zone and consist of two main groups, the Ovambo and, to the east of Ovamboland, the Okavangos. The system of tribal Reserves is in force in South-West Africa and, particularly outside of the Police Zone, the inhabitants are left very much to themselves. During the German occupation there were no officials in Ovamboland.

There are 107,000 Ovambos, divided into six tribes, and the whole area is to-day in charge of a Native Commissioner, two European assistants, and fourteen Bantu assistants. Three of the tribes are governed by chiefs and the remaining three by councils of headmen. Bantu laws and custom are everywhere in force and the Government exercises a minimum of control—just sufficient to prevent inter-tribal war and crimes of violence.

The Ovambos live in villages surrounded by fences of wooden palings or of brushwood. They are polygamous and a man's status depends on his number of wives. The women cultivate the fields and the men build the huts, care for the stock, and make the necessary household and agricultural implements. They possess the art of smelting iron and copper and make excellent knives and other implements. They build grain store baskets on wooden poles, and this gives them a primitive grain elevator safe from white ants and weevils. They dig water-holes and cut out a kind of spiral staircase to enable them to reach the bottom. They are good at making baskets and at pottery. It must be remembered that they have not been so much influenced by European civilization as the Bantu in the Union or in Southern Rhodesia. Apart from the few missionaries and officials, there are no Europeans in Ovamboland and the Ovambos are separated by semi-desert

country from the central portion of the territory, where the Europeans live. That is why they still retain many of the arts and customs which are dead or dying in the Reserves of the Union. But here, too, European civilization is encroaching, and Bantu customs and arts are beginning to show signs of change under its powerful influence.

As is usual in Southern Africa, education is in the hands of the mission societies, and Government pays a grant towards the education of the Ovambo. There are a few schools and one flourishing industrial school run by the Finnish Mission. The same institutions, with local differences, that obtain among other Bantu tribes obtain here too. Initiation ceremonies, marriage rites, tribal and family obligations, religious beliefs, witchcraft, and superstition are similar to those elsewhere in Africa. The Christian religion, schools, and medical work, for which, again, the missions are responsible with very little Government aid, are gradually doing their work.

To the east of Ovamboland, on the Okavango River, are about 22,000 Okavango Bantu. Their country is also a Reserve and, as regards administration, mission societies and education, the conditions are much the same as in Ovamboland. The officials in charge say that the Okavango are much more primitive and backward in their habits and customs than the Ovambo. Living in a tropical climate, they have not had such a struggle for existence and do not show the same abilities and industry.

There is one very important difference between these two groups and the Bantu in Reserves in South Africa. In the Union and in the Protectorates, we found that the impact of a money economy on a subsistence economy had in course of time brought about a large migration from the Reserves to the towns and farms and mines. There are farming and mining in South-West Africa, but on such a comparatively small scale that the Reserves of Ovamboland and the Okavango have not been seriously drawn upon. It is true that recruiting takes place in these

two areas, but there is not the constant flow to and from the mines that is found in South Africa. The Ovambo are isolated from the rest of South-West Africa by semi-desert country, and less than 5 per cent of them are found in the Police Zone. The tribes further south supply most of the labour for European farms. The result of this is that the Ovambo and the Okavango are not subject to the strains that tribal life in the Union suffers, and European ideas can be introduced more slowly without violently disturbing the foundations of tribal life and institutions. It is true, of course, that such a primitive subsistence economy as the Ovambo and Okavango practise shows very few signs of advancing along what Europeans regard as progressive lines and their social and economic life tends to be static.

In the Police Zone the important tribe is the Herero. We saw that this tribe had lived in constant enmity with the Nama Hottentots until the German Government came to maintain the peace. The rebellion of 1904-7 broke their tribal organization and the German Government forbade them to keep cattle; this effectively prevented them from reorganizing the tribal system, because to them cattle were the spiritual bonds of the tribe. The Union Government promised to give them land and to let them keep cattle. Reserves were accordingly created, but the Hereros were far from satisfied, because they had understood that the conquest of the Germans would result in their getting the whole land back. Instead of this, the European population increased by emigration from the Union, and the Herero are to-day a dissatisfied people.

There are about 24,000 Hereros and about 19,000 live in various Reserves. Government has sunk boreholes for them, constructed dipping-tanks, and established dairies for them; but to-day, although they are a proud people, they are poverty-stricken and sullen and refuse to co-operate in any scheme for the improvement of their condition. They are opposed to having missionaries or mission schools in their Reserves, and the only school is one which the Government has recently

opened. Like most Bantu, the Herero tribal and religious customs are intimately connected with cattle, and they refuse to sell their stock to make money. They have all the tribal customs and superstitious beliefs that we find elsewhere among primitive Bantu tribes. Their houses and their family relationships, their religious ceremonies at birth or marriage or death, their dances and music and stories, and their general mode of life, are much the same as among other tribes, though there are, of course, marked differences in detail.

Probably the chief reason why the Herero are so dissatisfied is that their tribal organization was broken up after the rebellion. Their Paramount Chief died in exile and for many years they were deprived of their customary tribal life. During these years they took to Christianity in great numbers, but when they thought they saw a chance, under the Union Government, of re-establishing the old tribal life, they left the farms on which they were working and flocked to the Reserves. They found, however, that it was not easy to rebuild the tribal system once it had broken down and so they have become discouraged.

Apart from the Bantu tribes in South-West Africa, there are Hottentots, Bushmen, Bastards, and Beig Damara. There are about 20,000 Nama or Hottentots scattered in a few Reserves and as servants to the Europeans. In their Reserves they are well off for mission stations and schools, but they are poor and backward and have no real tribal unity or pride of race like the Ovambo. One of the Hottentot tribes, the Bondelswarts, rebelled against the Government in 1922 and the rising was suppressed with a good deal of severity. Civilization has deprived them of their customary means of living, since they may no more roam the country hunting or raiding the Herero for cattle. They must now make their living by working for the Europeans or by agriculture and stock-farming in a part of the country where Nature is not kind and where periodic droughts reduce them to hunger and want.

There are about 5,000 Bushmen in South-West Africa,



and these people, as elsewhere, are unable to adapt themselves to European civilization. They have steadily retreated before the Europeans, and the Government is considering establishing a Reserve where they may live as they are accustomed to live, by hunting and from roots and herbs. Very occasionally they become servants of European farmers, but, as a rule, they keep as far away as possible from European civilization. There are very few Bushmen left in Africa and their art and music are famous. European civilization does not seem to be able to influence them in any way

There are about 9,000 Bastards, or people of mixed European and non-European descent, and they live in a Reserve of their own called the Reheboth Reserve. They have their own Council and a written constitution which was in existence before the German occupation. They are a backward people and, though some of them are well off, they find it exceedingly difficult to make a living.

Finally, there are the Berg Damaras, with a population of about 24,000. These people are not pure Bantu and they have an interesting history. Before the German occupation they were servants of the Hereros and Nama and were looked down upon by these tribes. In many cases they were practically slaves. To-day they are scattered all over the territory and are the servants of the Europeans in the towns and on the farms. They have no real tribal organization and they only became completely free when the German Government broke the power of the Hereros. Some of them live in the Reserves, but mostly they form the chief labour force of the country. They have responded well to European civilization and have been able to adapt themselves to the new conditions more easily than the other tribes.

There are not many towns in South-West Africa, but where there are there will be found the same sort of Location for non-Europeans as elsewhere in southern Africa. Windhoek, the capital and largest town, has a population of 4,000 Europeans and 6,000 non-Europeans. Such portions of the

Urban Areas Act of South Africa as are relevant apply in South-West Africa too, and municipal councils have limited powers to make regulations for the Locations. There is a pass system in force, but it does not apply in the Reserves. Except in the Reserves, the non-Europeans pay very few taxes. There is a pass fee and they have to pay Wheel Tax and Dog Tax. In the Reserves the taxes are chiefly grazing fees and Dog Taxes, and all the money goes to the Tribal Funds to be spent in the Reserves for the benefit of the inhabitants. A vagrancy law is in force outside of the Reserves. By this a non-European may choose his own master, but, if he cannot find one, the magistrate may do so for him. If he refuses to accept this work, he may be charged under the vagrancy law and given the option of going to work or of going to prison.

As we saw above, the education of the Bantu and of the Coloured population is in the hands of the mission societies. The Government pays the salaries of teachers and supplies furniture and equipment. The mission societies must supply the buildings and pay half the cost of the books. There are ten schools for coloured people and about sixty-five for Bantu. There are also three training schools for teachers. The total number of pupils in all schools is about 5,000 and the amount spent by the Government is about £3 per pupil per year. For Europeans it is about £18.

The Government has built three hospitals for non-Europeans, at Windhoek, Kcetmanshoop, and Omaruru, and in Windhoek there is a Native dispensary. Employees of the railways and of the mines receive free medical attention. In the Reserves, mission societies sometimes have a doctor on the staff, and the Government pays a subsidy or supplies drugs free of charge.

It should be realized that the conditions in South-West Africa are dependent on the Union Government and that there are prospects of considerable change in the future. A Government Commission investigated affairs there in 1936 and recommended, among other things, that the Native Administration

staff should be increased, that more money should be spent on education and on medical facilities for non-Europeans, and that non-Europeans should pay slightly more taxation. The Commission also recommended certain constitutional changes, but even if these are adopted the administration of non-Europeans will still remain the responsibility of the Union Government, working through the Administrator.

#### CONCLUSION

It might be fitting now to point some kind of moral, and to sketch, however briefly, the policy to which we think what we have written points. However, we have been doing our best to write objectively and express only views which are generally accepted, and we do not intend to go further here. The relations of the races in Southern Africa are a subject on which most Europeans in the Union inevitably form opinions of their own, and we only hope some of them may find this book helpful in doing so.

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